Labour Monthly

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

THE WAY TO VICTORY

by

HARRY POLLITT

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Our Forces Grow

A Special Message to LABOUR MONTHLY Readers

from YEMELYAN YAROSLAVSKY

(Member of Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union)

MOSCOW, September 5th, 1941 (*by cablegram*).

IN EMBARKING on war against the U.S.S.R., a step which is extremely unpopular in Germany, Hitler counted on breaking the U.S.S.R. in a short space of time, on bringing the war to a speedy termination, completely isolating the U.S.S.R. and initiating a crusade against it. None of these aims has been achieved. In two months of war Hitler has lost in battle against the Red Army over two million killed, wounded and prisoners; whereas in the course of all bloody wars which Hitler has launched against the peoples of the world he has lost two million nine hundred and thirty thousand. This figure includes the German losses during the intervention in Spain; in the war with Poland, Norway, France; in Africa, in the Balkans; losses resulting from air raids, and lastly losses in the war against the U.S.S.R. Consequently, two-thirds of Nazi Germany's losses are accounted for by Hitler's sanguinary adventure, in the course of two months' war against the U.S.S.R. What hopes can he have that the third or fourth month of the war will be more lucky? Cannot the opposite be assumed, that his losses will increase now that he has stretched out the front tremendously, now that behind his lines thousands of partisan detachments have taken up the fight, now that the Soviet people are mobilising all forces to repel the foe, now that a People's War is flaring up in countries occupied by Germany, and the forces of Britain and the U.S.A. are growing daily in preparation for decisive blows against Hitler's armies?

It is worth while recalling Germany's losses on the Eastern Front during the First Imperialist War. In four years of war Germany lost two million five hundred and ninety thousand men in killed and wounded on the Eastern Front. Now in two months of war against the U.S.S.R. their losses exceed two million. Hence in only two months of war against the U.S.S.R. the Germans have lost two-thirds of their losses on the Eastern Front in four years of the First Imperialist War. But what is the bloodthirsty gang of Fascists counting on? Indeed, what can they count on? Their crusade against the U.S.S.R. has suffered dismal failure. Their blitzkrieg plans are frustrated. The myth of the invincibility of the German Army is shattered. The rottenness of all the vulnerable points of Fascist ideology so-called, and of the Fascist Army, is laid bare to the whole world. Serious consternation and anxiety for the morrow are already apparent in the enemy's camp. The enemy is desperately attempting to push forward, for he cannot afford to stop; any halt would be tantamount to admission of impotence, and would necessitate a backward movement. But what awaits him behind the lines are the millions of people whom he has impoverished, degraded and plundered. Behind the Nazi lines lies hungry Germany, whose people have suffered so much under Fascist rule. In the history of wars those armies are victorious whose forces increased in the course of the war, while those states and armies suffer defeat whose forces became depleted and decreased in the course of the war.

Fascism's forces are becoming exhausted. The anti-Fascist coalition is gaining

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strength throughout. One of the mightiest forces in the coalition of democratic countries that will put Fascism in its grave is the peoples of the U.S.S.R. headed by the Russian people. The weight of the German losses may be judged from many reports emanating from German sources. A German sergeant-major prisoner near Gomel wrote to his wife in Munich : "Here we are in Gomel. Ten days ago there were one hundred and thirty-eight in our company, to-day only eighteen remain. All day we roamed through Gomel in the hope of finding a little gift for you and something to eat. But, just imagine, there is nothing left, even the apple trees have no apples on them."

Major-General Berezovsky, in describing the battle for Gomel which lasted many days, reports that the Germans lost approximately eighty thousand killed and wounded, some two hundred tanks, several hundred artillery guns, thousands of motor lorries and about one hundred aircraft. That is what the Nazi Command paid for Gomel. The Red Army is steeled in two months' fighting. The enemy dreads our infantry bayonet attacks and evades them. He also fears night battles. The Fascist flyers often evade air encounters. In six weeks the Nazis have lost on the Eastern Front alone about ten per cent. of their submarine fleet, a great number of transport vessels, destroyers and other seacraft. The male population of the U.S.S.R. is more than double that of Germany. And while the German youth has been exhausted by hunger during all these years, the youth of the Soviet countries is flourishing: a steeled, healthy, fighting generation knowing what it is fighting for, excellent manpower heroically battling for our lofty aims. The forces of the Popular Guard are also growing. Popular Guard detachments include World War and Civil War veterans, workers, office employees and collective farmers. The fulfilment of the three great Five Year Plans drawn up by Stalin has given the country new metal, chemical, engineering, oil and coal centres in regions inaccessible to the enemy. Tens of millions of people in the deep rear are working with doubled and trebled energy so that these vast resources might be converted into weapons with which crushing blows will be inflicted on the foe. The Guerrilla warfare movement embracing the entire people is developing behind the enemy lines, and Soviet partisan fighters enjoy the wholehearted support of the population. These guerrillas are inflicting telling blows against the enemy, destroying his communications, intercepting food and fuel transports, raiding and capturing enemy headquarters, annihilating Fascist soldiers and officers, demolishing bridges and everywhere creating an atmosphere of constant peril for the German troops. Nazi soldiers and officers taken prisoner by the Red Army are constrained to admit that their position in the rear is daily becoming ever more precarious. Lance-Corporal Birkbauer wrote to his bride on July 12: "We are always hungry because food supplies are constantly being held up due to poor roads and to the fact that the Russians destroy and burn everything as they retreat. We are lucky if we find a few potatoes and if we can requisition a few pieces of stale bread from the population. Besides we are in constant danger. Guerrillas shoot at our columns in broad daylight. I have little hope of ever returning home from this hell, from this accursed Russia. You can't imagine what we are going through here."

Our forces are growing throughout the world. A mighty coalition has been established. In consists not only of the U.S.S.R., Britain and the U.S.A., but with every day it enlists the sympathy and support of the peoples of all countries and all the inhabitants of occupied countries. The war has entered its third month. The struggle proceeds over a vast territory. All the forces of the people must be exerted to hurl back the enemy now trampling Soviet soil. The enemy has still to feel the power of our blows, about which he can already form an idea from the terrific losses he has suffered during the first two months of the war. We shall do everything to make him feel this as early as possible. Let all friends of the U.S.S.R. the world over work with even greater energy and even greater determination. Let them not delay too long the decisive blows which must be dealt the enemy. Let them hasten the mobilisation of means and forces necessary for these blows. The quicker we crush Fascism, the hated enemy of the world, the less sacrifice will this struggle entail. The stronger the support to the Soviet Union in this just cause, the sooner will the danger threatening the countries which Hitler's bandit armies intends to attack be removed. There must not be the slightest complacency among those who are out to see Fascism smashed. Everyone must work for the further enhancement of our Forces. This enhancement must be hastened, and in this way we shall save millions of lives for creative work, for building on soil liberated from the brown plague.

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Notes of the Month

After Three Months—Urgent Tasks—End the Lost Chances—Warnings for the Left—Fulfil the Pact—Spectators or Fighters?—Face the Facts—Government and People—Enemies in Sheeps' Clothing—The New Munichism—Guests of Honour—Moore-Brabazon—The Trades Union Congress and Parliament—And the Lesson—A Programme of Action—The Second Front—Clean the Augæan Stables—Working Class Unity.

THREE MONTHS HAVE passed since the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union. The battle in the East grows fiercer. The lull in the West at present continues. Nothing is to be gained by closing our eyes to the harsh realities of the present situation. In the twelfth week of the conflict, that is, after four times the period required for the collapse of France before the Nazi assault, the first driblets of supplies from Britain and the United States have begun to arrive in the Soviet Union. These supplies are welcome, even though tardy, even though two months after the signing of the Pact, as an earnest of the more that is to come. But can we be satisfied with this scale and tempo of achievement, in comparison with the scale and tempo of the conflict? Can we be satisfied with a situation in which, while the Government chides the "impatience" of critics, solemnly assures them that "the study of the whole problem has been ceaselessly proceeding" (after twelve weeks of the most gigantic battle in history), and denounces every suggestion of any form of action as an invitation to "folly," to "futile and disastrous gestures," to "stage shows." Hitler is enabled to draw the practical conclusion from these declarations by immediately withdrawing hundreds of thousands of men from the West to the East? Can we be satisfied with a situation in which a Minister of the Crown can declare that he looks forward to the mutual extermination of the Russian and German armies in order that the British Empire may dominate Europe, and official censure is reserved, not for the Minister; but for those who were "mischievous" enough to report this statement of policy by a Minister as an issue of public concern?

CAN WE BE satisfied that, when the assistance of every nation is vitally needed in this struggle, the moment should be chosen to affirm the exclusion of India from the principle of self-determination laid down in the Atlantic Charter, to maintain more than twelve thousand political prisoners in gaol and thus thrust aside the co-operation of four hundred millions of people? Can we be satisfied that, when the question of production is admittedly the crucial question for the fulfilment of our task, the carefully formulated demands of the conferences of shop stewards, representing hundreds of thousands of the key workers in industry, should be brushed aside, and the most urgent elementary steps for tackling the existing chaos and driving through the obstacles to full production are still not undertaken? No. There is still much to be done. The British-Soviet Pact represents a beginning, the greatest step forward in the recent history of the British people, holding out immeasurable and glorious prospects for the future of this country and the world, if the path thus entered on is followed through to its completion in a common victory and the common building of a new world. But it is a promise whose fulfilment depends on the efforts of the people, and above all on the strength of our present struggle to secure its effective fulfilment. The sooner we recognise this, and replace the present atmosphere of illusions and easy acceptance of eloquent words as a substitute for deeds by a

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serious grappling with our own tasks, the better for the future. For it is necessary to recognise that, as a result of our delays and inaction, we are in danger of having let the most favourable opportunities slip through our fingers, and are now entering into the most critical phase of the present conflict.

AT THIS MOMENT it is relevant to recall a previous most critical phase in the gathering of the struggle of the peoples against fascism—the five months between March and September, 1939, when the Anglo-Soviet Pact, which could have prevented the present war, was nearly within our grasp, and was lost. Why was it lost? Primarily because Chamberlain and the Munichites were in power, who did not seriously want a reciprocal Anglo-Soviet Pact; who as late as May were still rejecting it on principle on the grounds that it would divide Europe into opposing ideological camps; who entered tardily into negotiations, delayed and protracted the sending of the Mission to Moscow, and sought to utilise the negotiations as a simultaneous lever of pressure to reach an understanding with Hitler, with the offer of the thousand million pounds loan to Hitler; who, even after the full German mobilisation and open impending invasion of Poland, refused the Soviet proposals for the military defence of Poland; who thus made clear that their real objective was not an effective common front against fascist aggression, but the promoting of Nazi-Soviet war; and who thereby made inevitable the counter-stroke of the German-Soviet Pact, which parried their plans and taught a hard lesson to the peoples of the West, to learn through the bitter experience of two years of isolated war against Nazi Germany the necessity of alliance with the Soviet Union.

BUT THE SECONDARY and parallel responsibilty for this failure lay with the inaction, passivity and complacency of the left during these critical months; the bankruptcy of leadership of the working class and democratic movement, who failed to mobilise the will of the overwhelming majority of the people for an Anglo-Soviet Pact (87 per cent. in the spring of 1939, according to the Gallup poll) into such channels of united activity, in association with the sections of the ruling class supporting the Pact, as would have compelled its realisation; who, on the contrary, spent those critical months fatuously proclaiming in screaming headlines or congratulatory speeches that the Pact was as good as signed already or about to be signed in a day or two; chided the impatience of critics; opposed unity; and entered into elaborate speculations and blueprint discussions on the reconstruction of Europe "after" the Pact, how to do a deal with Hitler "after" the Pact, "anti-fascism is not enough," etc., as in the Southport proceedings of the Labour Party Conference in June, 1939, with Bevin's famous speech offering Hitler to "come in on the ground floor." That was how that battle was lost, with the consequences we have since had to go through. The conditions are now basically changed. But the lesson of the warning against passivity and complacency of the left, and refusal of unity, remains.

TO-DAY THE CONDITIONS are basically changed: but the struggle goes forward in new forms corresponding to the new conditions. Chamberlain has gone and his associates, the Munichites, are no longer in direct control of the Government. The British-Soviet Alliance exists. The leadership of the Government is in the hands of that section of the ruling class, represented by Churchill, which, without changing its basic viewpoint with regard to Communism, the working class movement and the Soviet Union, recognises Hitler and the menace of Nazi world expansion as the primary immediate enemy of British imperialism, and which has therefore recognised the necessity of the alliance with the Soviet Union for the common aim of the defeat of Hitlerite Germany. This is the great step forward represented by the British-Soviet

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Alliance. But it is obvious that this is only the beginning of a change, not yet a completed change. Much more is needed for the conditions of the victory of the peoples over fascism. The issue is no longer the acceptance or refusal of the Pact. The issue is the maximum effective fulfilment of the Pact and of all the necessary conditions for the victory of the peoples over fascism. Only the most vigorous and united drive of all the working class and democratic forces can compel these necessary measures against the resistance of the still powerful reactionary influences within the Government.

THE TASK OF the left, of the working class and democratic forces within the broad national front, is to fight for the most effective fulfilment of the Alliance and to put forward step by step the necessary measures which require to be carried out for this end, to strengthen the mass basis of real national unity, and to combat every reactionary obstruction. This responsibility is greater than ever; the struggle goes forward to-day within the new forms, within the broad national unity on the basis of acceptance of the Alliance, with even greater urgency than in any crisis of the past, as the issues are more momentous. Then the issue was peace or war. To-day the issue is victory or defeat in a conflict on which the future of the world depends.

WHAT IS THE reason for the hesitancy, the inaction, the delays of the Government in the present urgent situation, even after the policy of the Alliance has been accepted? Why the failure to send supplies for nearly three months in the midst of a lightning war which has driven into the heart of Russia? Why the protraction of the arrangements of the Three Power Conference to discuss the organisation of supplies, so that at the end of three months its date has still to be announced? Why the refusal of any action in the West? Why the protection of a Moore-Brabazon? Why the failure to tackle the scandals of production, or the organisation of man-power, the coal crisis, agriculture? Why the resentment of criticism, the complaining, petulant, defensive note of every Government speech ("some people seem to think nothing has been done, nothing is being sent, and nothing is going on," etc.), the failure to arouse the confidence and enthusiasm of the people, and to overcome the widespread passivity and cynicism in the only way in which it can be overcome, not by preaching, but by a policy of action? The reasons must be sought where they exist, not in personalities, not in accidents, not in muddle, but in the political situation, in the relations of political forces; and it is there that they must be tackled openly, boldly and without reserve: it is there that the greatest responsibility rests on the militant working class and democratic movement to give leadership and end the conditions which are throttling the people, turning them into a nation of spectators in the greatest battle on which their fate depends, and endangering the common cause of Britain and the Soviet Union.

WHAT ARE THE hard facts of the present political situation which underlie the bankruptcy in action? It is only necessary to examine the plain realities of the existing political situation, whether as measured in the composition of the Government, the role of parliament, the riot of vested interests in industry, or the inactivity of the labour movement, to discern reasons in plenty for the throttling lack of progress in every sphere of the nation's effort. We said above that the Munichites are no longer in power. But it is necessary to qualify this. In the deepest sense those old traditionalist reactionary representatives of anti-national privilege and class narrowness, secretly sympathetic to fascism, hating every popular advance, fearful of any world future which may threaten their possessions and class domination, and therefore ready

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to sacrifice the interests of the nation to their class position, remain very powerful in every sphere. Their influence pervades every decision of policy, and still more the execution of policy.

CONSIDER THE FACTS of the present political scene. First, the former Chamberlainite or Munichite leaders, although no longer in direct control of the Government, continue powerfully entrenched in the Tory Party and the governmental machine, in industry, finance and the High Command; are strongly represented in the Government; continue critical of Churchill, even while they seek to use him, since they know their own popular stock is exhausted, but watch and intrigue for the favourable moment to replace him; and while formally accepting the policy of the Alliance, hamper and retard its execution in practice. Second, the Government as a whole is still a Government of conciliation with the Munichites; the Churchillians, fearful of the mass movement, distrustful of their own position, bound by their class outlook and their class fears, protect and throw the mantle of their present prestige around their associates, even the most notorious enemies of the people; after the bold stroke of the Alliance, pursue a hesitant, wavering and limited policy in its execution; distrust the movements of popular revolt abroad, and encourage the Vansittart type of propaganda which seeks to weld the German people with their Nazi rulers; repel the colonial peoples; and protect and defend the chaos of vested interests in production. Third, the representatives of the Labour movement in the Government are still drawn from the older dominant leadership who were most closely associated with Chamberlainism in the past, with non-intervention, Munich and the opposition to working class unity and a popular front, and who continue to oppose working class unity to-day; there are no representatives of the left in the Government, not even a Lloyd George, still less a Shinwell, Tanner, Haldane or Pritt, or a militant shop steward or direct representative of the workers in industry. The composition of the Government, based on the party relations of an obsolete reactionary parliament, does not correspond to the popular consciousness to-day or to the vital needs of the situation. Fourth, working class unity, the essential core of real national unity, is not yet achieved; and the present paralysis of the official labour movement hampers the growth of the popular mass movement which can alone sweep away all the obstacles in the path and lead to the strengthening of the Government and its reconstruction as a Government of real national unity capable of carrying out with a strong hand the urgent tasks now required.

THE FIRST NECESSITY in approaching the present political situation and the tasks for securing the effective prosecution of the joint war of the peoples against fascism is to recognise that the fight for British-Soviet unity in action is not completed with the signing of the Alliance and the universal benedictions over the Alliance, but needs now more urgently than ever to be actively carried forward. In public expression there is complete formal unanimity on the basis of the Alliance; no voice dares to be raised in public against it. But behind this formal unanimity there exists the widest variety of outlooks and policies with regard to the methods of execution of the Alliance, as well as in every sphere of public policy associated with the war, home questions, economic policy, war aims, foreign policy, colonial policy, etc.—all intimately bound up with the conditions of victory of the peoples over fascism. The old reactionary Munichite forces which in the past sought to pursue the straight-line aim of an understanding with Hitler in order to promote Nazi-Soviet war, and which entered on the war against Hitler as their answer to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact, with the avowed intention to force Hitler-Germany into the channels of anti-Soviet war, have not disappeared because they would no longer venture to put forward publicly their old programme. Instead, they have

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adapted themselves to the conditions of the Alliance, and pursue their continuous basic aims behind the protective colouring of a nominal support.

THEIR POLICY NOW becomes the policy of the minimum fulfilment of the Alliance, restriction and delay of support to the Soviet Union, minimum participation by Britain, the policy of the lull and the respite, which plays into the hands of Hitler's "one by one." Even this is no longer expressed with the blatant openness with which such an organ as the "Daily Mail" at the outset, on June 23, after formally accepting the Prime Minister's speech, went on to lay down: "As the Prime Minister declared, we shall give such help as we can. But we must not weaken our own armed strength by a single gun or a single plane." To-day this outlook is deepened. They grudgingly agree to certain limited supplies. But their whole accompanying line of expression reveals that they regard such supplies as necessary instruments in a wider policy. Never forgetting their old basic aims, they view with ill-concealed delight the Nazi-Soviet conflict and the terrific destruction it involves for both combatants. Seeking by every means to hold the British forces immune and inactive during the critical time when their action could most decisively help the common cause, they openly calculate on intervening fresh, and at the peak of production, later, when both combatants in the East are exhausted, and thus ensuring the Anglo-American domination of Europe and preservation of the old order after the collapse of fascism. Such becomes the New Munichism. While the millions fight and die in Eastern Europe, they ostentatiously parade their blue-prints for the future Anglo-American reorganisation and restoration of order in Europe. And many Labour ideologists play into their hands by indulging in similar speculations. It is obvious that the New Munichism is as blind and deadly as the old for the interests of the British nation, and would, if allowed to be carried through, bring an even more bloody and destructive disillusionment, by allowing Hitler to deal first with the East and then turn to the West, instead of both sides striking those maximum common and simultaneous blows against Hitler which are essential for his defeat.

IS THERE ANY evidence that such an outlook exists in commanding circles in Britain, and especially within the circles of the Government? Under ordinary circumstances such evidence would not be easy to come by, and the charge might be regarded as the fantastic imagination of a jaundiced critic. But in this case the evidence has come to the surface in the most explicit form, in the notorious example of the Minister of Aircraft Production, Colonel Moore-Brabazon. The very attempts to brush aside the case, or to attack the critics who raised it, but not to deny the facts, makes it the more important. It means that the treatment of this case becomes the crucial test of the political situation. So far from brushing it aside as a minor incident or passing sensation, it is necessary to treat it with the utmost seriousness. Let us first introduce Colonel Moore-Brabazon. For this purpose a passage from the "Londoner's Diary" in the Evening Standard of July 27, 1939, one month before the war, may be of interest:—

> "Lady Mosley emerged last night as a new political hostess. She and Sir Oswald gave a dinner party at their home at 129 Grosvenor Road, the former home of the Riviera Night Club.
>
> "The guests of honour were three Tory M.P.s, Colonel Moore-Brabazon and Captain Alan Ramsay and Sir Jocelyn Lucas, the newly-elected member for South Portsmouth.
>
> "The other guests included Sir Oswald's mother, Admiral Sir Barry Domvile and Lady Domvile, Professor Laurie, and Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, who is a Mosley prospective candidate at next elections.
>
> "Another guest was Mr. Philip Farrer, Lord Salisbury's private secretary. Journalism was represented by Mr. G. Ward Price and Mr. James Wentworth Day."

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The names provide a roll-call worthy of Captain Ramsay's "Red Book" which Mr. Morrison still, so zealously protects from publication. And this guest-of-honour of Mosley, companion of Captain Ramsay, becomes Minister of Aircraft Production in charge of the supply of aircraft to the Soviet Union.

WITH THIS BACKGROUND, what Colonel Moore-Brabazon said at the private meeting at Manchester, at which he was "glad there were no reporters present," becomes of increased importance. His statement has only been made public in the form of the summary provided by the Chairman of the A.E.U. at the Trades Union Congress; but since this summary has not been denied, it may be regarded as correct. According to this summary, he expressed the "hope that the Russian and German armies will exterminate each other, and while this is taking place, we, the British Commonwealth of Nations, will so develop our Air Force and other armed forces that, if Russia and Germany do destroy each other, we shall have the dominating power in Europe." This statement was not made for publication; but two faithful trade union watchdogs were present, and did their duty and reported it to their union, which brought it before the Trades Union Congress—an admirable example of working class democracy in action, the real protection of the liberties and interests of the people by mass vigilance from below against the operations of the Fifth Column and enemies of the people.

WHEN this issue was raised in Parliament, a curiously different response was shown from that at the Trades Union Congress, where the seriousness of the issue was fully recognised. The statement was not denied. But the questioners were placed in the pillory for raising it. This is a very pretty state of affairs in a responsible body of public representatives, whose responsibility should of course be to those *outside the House*, and not to themselves as a closed corporation for hushing up treason and sabotage. It was explained that this was a private statement in contradiction to a public statement made by the same Minister on another occasion when he knew reporters were present. By some strange gymnastic of argument the public statement was regarded as cancelling out the private statement, much as if a judge were to lay down that a fraudulent company promoter's printed prospectus should be regarded as his true opinion of the prospects of his flotation, cancelling out anything that he may have written straight from the horse's mouth in a private letter to friends, the latter being indignantly ruled out by the judge as a most improper piece of evidence to bring forward.

IT IS OBVIOUS that the private statement is the more important and the more likely to express the Minister's real thoughts. As Gallacher justly said in Parliament with regard to the "explanation": "The Minister of Aircraft Production has given an explanation of his speech: it was extempore; he had not been thinking of what he was saying. But because he was not thinking what he was saying, his inmost thoughts came out." It was asserted that it was "mischievous" to raise the question of such a statement. But the "mischief" was the statement; the public service was the raising of it. The important thing is not that he carelessly uttered the sentiments (it is fortunate that he did, since this brought the issue to the light), but that he and hundreds like him in high places, who are more skilful to voice their opinion only in their own privacy, should entertain such sentiments completely contrary to the interests of the people. The question is not the question of an "indiscretion," but of a policy. The defence makes the matter worse. The question of an individual Cabinet Minister is turned by this treatment into a question of the attitude of the whole Government and the seriousness of its policy in carrying out the Alliance. For it is obvious that any Government seriously concerned for carrying out the policy

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of the Alliance would lose no time to deal with and expel any Minister entertaining such a contrary policy. Until this is done, until the Moore-Brabazons and their like are driven out from the Government, it is inevitable that there can be no public confidence in the seriousness of the measures of the Government in carrying out the Alliance.

ALL THIS REVEALS the necessity for a more active campaign of the working class and democratic movement to secure the effective carrying through of the policy of the Alliance. This means a positive concrete programme. First, to compel the speediest establishment of that second military front, through whatever forms of most appropriate action, in the West, which can alone effectively weaken Hitler's attack in the East and thus prevent his winning successive victories against each enemy in turn. Second, to overcome the obstacles in the way of increased war production, by a full mobilisation of all resources and man-power, central planning and ruthless overriding of all private and sectional interests. Third, to drive through a vigorous and democratic war policy in every field, in home questions, foreign policy, colonial policy and propaganda; to protect the interests and conditions of the people; to restore the "Daily Worker"; to enforce a new approach to the peoples of India and Ireland. Fourth, to purge the reactionaries, secret friends of Hitler and half-hearted supporters of the Alliance, however high their positions, with the vigour of a Clemenceau, and to bring new forces into the Government and secure its reconstruction for the fulfilment of these needs. All these objectives can only be secured by the most intensive and tireless mass campaign, reaching out to the entire labour movement, and to all supporters of democracy and opponents of fascism. Every question in the present situation, including those which appear in the first place technical or strategic, is in the last resort a political question, and requires a political mobilisation to secure its solution.

THIS APPLIES EQUALLY to such a controversial issue, involving many factors, as the second military front, which grows daily more urgent as the battle in the East sharpens. The technical arguments presented to justify its refusal, or assertions without argument ("futile and disastrous gesture"—Attlee, etc.) cannot be accepted as final, even though the public is in no position to judge correctly the technical and strategic issues involved. First, because as the Moore-Brabazon episode reveals, there are also political considerations involved. Second, because the technical experts are divided, as the controversy in the press and the recent advocacy of the second front by such organs as the "Times," "News-Chronicle" and "Daily Herald" indicate. Third, because the decisive judgment is the judgment of the necessity of action and the readiness to make sacrifices for it, and it is for the technical experts to find the means. And fourth, because Hitler has himself shown very clearly his understanding of its importance by his recent withdrawal of some twenty-five divisions out of the fifty originally maintained in the West at the end of June, following the Government's declarations. What does this show? It shows that he originally anticipated the possibility of military action in the West and considered it necessary to prepare forces for it, and has only been able to withdraw these and intensify the attack against the Soviet Union because the Government has made clear to him that he need have no anxiety on that score.

SO TOO WITH production. We cannot tolerate that at the height of the most intense phase of war and of the need for extended war production the steel monopoly should blandly be able to announce that it proposes to close down steel works and limit the production of steel, the essential basis for guns, planes, shells and tanks, at a time when the production of steel in this country is already only the level of one third to one quarter of that of Nazi Europe. We cannot

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tolerate that the coalowners should at this moment be closing down coalpits, with the certainty of a coal crisis in front, or that the absence of any serious and considered man-power policy should result in the continued withdrawal of miners from the mines, with coal shortage already developing, or the withdrawal of yet more skilled agricultural workers from the land, which already lacks workers, with the critical position of food production, only to swell an army of four millions which is in the main cut off from any military task. With what final result? To end up in the brilliant position described by Lord Beaverbrook when he said that "we are in the state of having more troops than weapons." But the fight against the waste, misuse of productive resources or restrictive policies of the reactionary monopolies, against the interests which profit by the existing anarchy, and for an ordered plan of war production, can only be carried through by the strength of the mass movement; the existing Government has proved itself incapable or unwilling to tackle the Augæan stables.

SUCH A POLITICAL mobilisation requires as its first condition the active participation of the working class organisations and the establishment of working class unity. The Trades Union Congress at Edinburgh in the beginning of September revealed welcome signs of a new stirring in the unions. This was revealed, not only in the big step forward, the decision to establish the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Council, but in a number of other aspects of the proceedings and decisions. Nevertheless, the decision in favour of international working class unity, reversing previous decisions, was accompanied by a reaffirmation of the refusal of working class unity at home: between Communism and the rest of the labour movement in Britain the gulf must remain fixed. On this the words of a newspaper favoured by the orthodox trade union and labour leaders, the "Daily Herald," may be usefully quoted:

> Mr. Churchill has already told the Russians frankly that his views on Communism are unchanged. Stalin has in no way revised his opinions of Capitalism.
>
> "But Churchill and Stalin face the situation like grown and sensible men.
>
> "It is up to all of us, whatever our political and 'ideological' creeds, to do the same.
>
> "The fact is that neither for the ideals of Democracy nor for the ideals of Communism can there be any place while Hitlerism exists, with its deadly purpose of reducing all the world to slavery under a Germany which is itself in slavery to Hitler.
>
> "Whatever is to be done in future about the conflict of opinion and ideal, this issue necessarily transcends the rest. We need not forget, or even pretend to forget, other differences. But we do and we must set those differences aside."
>
> (*Daily Herald*, July 14, 1941).

These words of the "Daily Herald" may be recommended to the attention of the Trades Union Congress General Council, the Labour Party Executive and the National Council of Labour.

R. P. D.

A reader in the Forces has been given permission by his Commander to start a Battery Library. He says: "I wonder if you could help me in respect of books. Could you get in touch with any people on our behalf who you think might have some books they have finished with? I feel sure that some of your Discussion Groups would jump at the opportunity to provide some intelligent reading material for the troops. Any books on any subject would be gratefully accepted." If any readers or Discussion Groups have any books available, will they please write us and we will send the address for despatch. PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE BOOKS TO THIS OFFICE.

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The Way to Victory

by

HARRY POLLITT

THE Prime Minister's speech on September 9, following the Trades Union Congress in the beginning of the month, has thrown a grave light on the present political situation and the responsibilities which fall on the people of this country to overcome the present complacency and end the policies of inaction.

For weeks prior to the meeting of Parliament on September 9 there had been widespread anxiety and concern expressed on all sides over the glaring contrast between our own slowness of action and the magnificent achievement of the Soviet Union's resistance to Hitler. The growing demand for more speedy assistance to the Soviet Union found expression in the call for a Second Front, and in the strong protests against the delay in convening the Three Power Conference. General expectations were expressed that when Parliament met, the Government would be able to make a positive declaration of policy and show that it meant business in fulfilling its obligations under the Anglo-Soviet Alliance.

The statement of policy made on September 9 by Mr. Churchill has failed completely to satisfy the disquiet, and the comment of the press, both by its restrained and critical character, has shown the general disappointment. Indeed one journal, commenting on Mr. Churchill's speech, stated: "What he had to say amounted, when it is analysed, to very little."

This puts the matter sharply, but not sharply enough; for in fact the speech revealed an impermissible complacency right in the centre of the Government itself, which is the basic reason for the widespread complacency that exists amongst large sections of the people.

There is grave reason for dissatisfaction with what the Prime Minister had to say on the question of the Soviet Union. It is understandable that precautions had to be taken to give no facts likely to be of assistance to the enemy. But, after making allowance for this, the one big fact that was most evident, and that will undoubtedly encourage Hitler, is that it is not contemplated to organise any Second Front at this stage, and that our help is in the main confined to sending munitions of war to the Soviet Union, nor is there any ground for conviction that these are being sent on the scale the situation demands from us.

It is impossible not to notice how many times in the debate the question of the vast man-power of the Soviet Union was referred to, and the part that Britain can play in providing the munitions of war. This, in the light of what is now taking place in the Soviet Union, and what is not taking place in the West, reveals another variation of something not altogether new in our history, namely that there exist strong tendencies to let others do the fighting and dying.

Can anyone be satisfied with this statement of policy of the Government, especially when it is reviewed in the light of the revealing statement of Moore-Brabazon and the Government's protection of Moore-Brabazon against his critics?

The Government has not got a real grip of the situation, nor is it taking the necessary measures which would promptly be responded to by the people, once they were really politically convinced of the seriousness of the entire position, and what they have to do in it.

There is a reluctance to sharply expose weaknesses in the Government's policy, because personal resentment is expressed by certain prominent Government leaders, and because it is falsely alleged that any criticism of the Government "plays into Hitler's hands."

We believe such an attitude to be entirely false and dangerous in the extreme.

If the Government is itself not giving the lead, and seeing that it is carried out regardless of vested interests, from whatever quarter, then it is inevitable that both complacency and disquiet should exist.

The leadership of the British people does not depend on any one man. It should depend on the strongest and most united government that the country can produce, based on the collective team work of all, and not afraid to draw strength and confidence from the demo-

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cratic initiative, drive and experience of the people. Above all it depends upon every member of the Government and all the vital positions it controls being composed of sincere, determined, anti-Fascist fighters, who have no "secret" or "private" opinions as to the supreme desirability of smashing Fascism and all the foulness it represents.

There are already too many in Britain who want to watch "the Nazis and the Communists wipe each other out" in the mistaken belief either that "this will give us our chance" or that Britain, apart from what the R.A.F. and Navy are doing, can afford to assume the role of a spectator.

What did Hitler hope to achieve when he attacked the Soviet Union? That by posing thus as "the saviour of the world from Bolshevism," he would split the ranks of the people in the democratic countries.

The immediate formation of the Anglo-Soviêt Alliance, as the reply to Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, was the first major political blow that he has received since the commencement of the war.

The second came with the support of the Alliance by the Dominions and by Roosevelt.

The third came with the smashing of the legend of Fascist military invincibility by the character of the resistance of the Red Army and the Soviet "Scorched Earth" policy.

The fourth political blow against Hitler was the joint precautionary measures taken by the Soviet Union and Britain in Iran to prevent that country being used as a Nazi base against the interests of both countries.

The fifth political blow to Hitler was given at the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress, where the proposal to form an Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Council was endorsed with acclamation.

Yet important as all these events are, both from their present and future political significance, it would be a profound mistake to believe that Hitlerite Germany and its international connections are not exceptionally strong.

A glance at the map ought to dispel any illusions of that sort. Fascism, despite the colossal bloody price it has had to pay, has made serious inroads into Soviet territory, involving problems for the Soviet people as yet very little understood in Britain.

The menace of Japan in the Far East and the preoccupations this gives to America, Australia, Britain and the Soviet Union, are exceedingly serious.

The possibility in the coming months of Hitler using Turkey as the stepping stone to further military adventures; the potential treachery of Franco-Spain and Vichy France (with whom the Government refuses to break despite their repeated treachery), as climatic conditions make an intensification of the war in Africa and around the shores of the Mediterranean a certainty, have all to be borne in mind.

Finally, the greater portion of Europe has in fact become a gigantic munitions factory, as well as a valuable means of food supply for Hitler.

Why did Hitler attack the Soviet Union?

He told us why in his speech on June 22nd when he attempted to justify his violation of the solemnly signed Non-Aggression Pact.

Hitler stated in so many words that his dreams of world conquest, and in particular the decisive defeat of Britain, could not be realised until he had crushed the Soviet Union; then, with nothing to fear in his rear, he could launch all he had got against Britain.

Any doubt about this being the case was dispelled by Goebbels in an interview in a Madrid newspaper on August 20, 1941, where he bluntly stated:

> "The war against Russia is a necessary preliminary condition for the final fight against Britain."

The people of Britain have got to realise that our past experiences are as nothing compared with the sacrifices we shall yet have to make if Hitler is to be defeated. The longer complacency exists, the greater the delay in taking every possible measure against Hitler, the greater the sacrifices future developments will make inevitable.

It is time the Government stopped treating the people as children and told them the brutal truth about the entire war crisis, what has to be faced, what has to be done, and the measures necessary to be carried through by every section of the people. Once this is done the people will respond to their uttermost limits.

At the same time the mass pressure on the Government itself must be greatly accelerated, so that we can obtain a stronger Government. For the stronger and more united the Government is, the more decisive will be its actions and the surer the voluntary response of the people, and the speedier the victory.

It is more than time the dead-heads,

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duds and failures were cleared out, and way made for new men and women who are not afraid of tackling the responsibilities involved in conducting a people's war, or of dealing with any vested interest in existence.

It is more than time that the Government and all the organisations it controls were purged of all who have the slightest sympathy with Fascism, or hold the view that if the Nazis and Communists fight each other long enough then later on it will be easy for us to step in and resume our wonted role of the world's greatest imperialist power.

Jack Tanner performed a national service, when at the Edinburgh Trades Union Congress he boldly pilloried Colonel Moore-Brabazon, the Minister of Aircraft Production, for a speech he recently made, which revealed him to be a dangerous enemy of both the British and Soviet people.

This man must be cleared out of his position. It is a scandal that Churchill defends and retains him in the Government, and uses cheap debating and insulting tactics to intimidate Parliament into an uneasy acquiescence.

We hope that similar publicity will be given to a statement of Captain Liddell Hart, the eminent military writer, who stated in the *Daily Mail* on September 8th, 1941:

> "At the outset of the Russian campaign few people in this country expected that Soviet Russia would succeed for long in withstanding a German blitzkrieg. And the higher the quarter the lower the expectations tended to be."

That we can have such "higher ups" so grossly misinformed, so secretly hoping "that the worst will happen," throws a flood of light on why Britain has experienced so many political and military defeats since the war began.

It is time we stopped admiring the Russians so much, and performed deeds alongside them that proved we are Allies, and prepared to sacrifice as much to smash Hitler as the Russians are doing.

Time we stopped so much loose talk about "Russia's vast manpower and Britain's productive capacity" and realised that the day when other countries did all the fighting and dying, while we made munitions for them, has gone for ever.

This is why we not only have to send now to the Soviet Union all the planes, tanks and guns possible, but to create a Second Front, that will show Fascism that the Anglo-Soviet Alliance is one of deeds and actions.

The demand for a Second Front is not some bloodthirsty whim of Communists "who are specially interested in Russia," but has been openly advocated in many responsible quarters of the press, despite enormous pressure from Government quarters to damp down on it.

People do not readily forget all that they have read about how it has been the cardinal principle of Nazi strategy since the end of the last war, to avoid in future wars any fighting on two fronts at the same time.

The question of the Second Front is important, not only from the military point of view in easing the pressure on the Red Army and developing that type of pincer movement it has been the strategy of the Nazi High Command to avoid, but from the point of view of its political effect on the people of every country in the world.

Speaking of the heroism of the Red Army, its reactions on Hitler, and the new perspectives now opened up, the Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Times* stated on September 5th, 1941:

> "Full Western co-operation in the Russian resistance is his greatest fear, for that would upset his process of dealing with his enemies one by one."

Yet even making full allowance for all that the R.A.F. is doing in the bombing of Germany (which would be taking place if no Anglo-Soviet Alliance was in existence), one thing now stands out as plain as daylight. That is that Hitler is being allowed to attack his enemies one by one, and, placing all he has got against the Soviet Union at the present time, later to attack Britain in circumstances that can be exceedingly dangerous for the British people.

The fact needs to be burnt into the people's minds that already, owing to our inaction, more than twenty Nazi Divisions have been transferred from France to the East to reinforce the attack on the Soviet Union.

We do not pretend to be in a position to dictate where the Second Front should be opened. That is a matter for the Government to decide, but on the question of creating a Second Front there cannot be room for doubt.

It is not now a question of creating a Second Front in countries where the people are hostile, and fear permanent conquest; for in every Nazi-occupied country in Western Europe there is a growing mass movement against Nazi-occupation that would welcome any assistance to throw off the hated Fascist yoke, and is a political factor carrying

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with it military values of the very greatest significance and assistance. It is equally significant that this mass movement has only developed to any serious degree since the Red Army resisted Hitler's invasion ; and the greater this resistance, the greater the sabotage carried out against Hitler in the countries held down by his brown beasts.

There is a good reason for these new developments. They arise because they know the Soviet Union is the guarantee against any Versailles kind of Peace, or any imperialist aims of any kind.

The internal situation in these Nazi-occupied countries creates an entirely new and unique situation, and the opening up of the Second Front has to take this into account alongside the fact that there are under arms in this country tens of thousands of men who left their own countries at the moment when the Quislings and Lavals handed them over to Fascism.

We sometimes wonder if the people of Britain really understand what the resistance of the Red Army on the Eastern Front has meant for them. The Soviet people are under no illusions however, and a significant leading article in the *Pravda* needs to be sharply popularised all over this country. The most important passage reads :

> " The Soviet Union took upon itself the main blow of the Fascist hordes, thus diverting the threat of invasion and bombing from England, and affording its ally the opportunity for firm and decisive action against the common enemy.
>
> Germany is bound to lose, but only at the price of very prolonged exertion. There is therefore an iron necessity to secure the speediest mobilisation of all the forces and resources against the Hitler front."

This is plain speaking and it is in our own interests that we treat it as such.

The creation of a Second Front is a task which will involve great sacrifices and it is our duty to face them.

It does mean death for thousands of the Armed Forces who will have to take part. But if it is not organised it will lead to a position where far heavier sacrifices will be taken later on.

If we are not prepared for such sacrifices to be made, then we have no right to expect others to continue making the colossal sacrifices they are making now.

We have, also, no right to demand a Second Front, unless we are going to create a production front that can achieve the very maximum from the productive resources of Britain.

Despite all sunshine stories to the contrary, the simple fact is that there is not a factory, mine or shipyard in Britain of any consequence where the workers employed in them are not aware of the possibilities that exist for a tremendous increase in their productive capacity.

The whole position has got to such a stage that when you mention the word Production, it only raises cynical comment or amused ironical adjectives.

It is caused by the appalling waste, inefficiency, lack of planning and control, wasted labour hours, lack of continuity in the productive process, the thousands of non-producers floating around factories, impeding production by their multiplicity of directives and so-called " expert " opinions.

There is no single plan or control either in the allocation of contracts or carrying out what are allocated.

This is a terrible position to have reached at a time when we are fighting for the whole future of humanity. But it can be remedied and quickly at that if the job is tackled with the necessary candour, thoroughness and relentless determination to smash down any barrier that stands in the way.

To increase production in the way it can be increased is going to be a difficult task to accomplish because of the very structure of British industry and the way also the trade unions have developed. It is a position which has complications to be found in no other country in the world. But they can all be tackled.

In the present situation even if you had swept on one side every vestige of capitalist mismanagement, you would still be compelled by the demands of mechanised warfare to examine how to increase production so that the Armed Forces could have all and more than they require, and that the Soviet Union could be helped to make up for their very great losses.

This is why as in all things connected with the conduct and winning of the war it is so urgently necessary that the workers in the factories should feel their own power, and be confident in the exercise of that power. For it is upon what they do that the issue depends both now and in the future. Once men and women on the job are really angry at what they see going on, and fight to put it right, then things will begin to move and not before. And trade union conditions can be absolutely safeguarded and shop stewards, factory and trade union organisations as a whole considerably strengthened.

The fear of what will happen after the

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war, the memories of what happened after the last war, at bottom represent defeatism. They show no faith in their own class; they display a belief that some of the top dogs are always going to be top dogs. They think that another class is always going to get the better of the working class.

They do not see that the men in the Armed Forces are also politically conscious these days, that when they know that they along with the lads in the workshops are really fighting and working together there is no power in Britain that is going to be allowed to pull any fast ones on them at the end of this war.

We take the view that the workers who are going to win the victory over foreign Fascists and reactionaries will never allow any of the British breed to try it on after the victory has been won.

This is why while fighting to rectify every abuse that springs from capitalist mismanagement and profiteering, at the same time we have to get together in the factories as between one shop steward and another, between one trade union and another, and co-operate together in workshop practices and customs in such a way that nothing is allowed to stand in the way of an all round increase in production. That skill, output, willingness to teach others, especially to make the fullest use of the army of women who are now coming into war industry shall be the intention of every worker, that the quality, quantity and rapidity with which we turn out the planes, guns, tanks, ships, shells and coal shall amaze the world.

If there is a need for a great change on the production front, there is even greater need for one on the Propaganda front.

No country seriously at war ought to allow the present pleasant Sunday afternoon methods to continue for a single day. We have never heard a single worker yet say, "by God, that was a fine broadcast last night, that's the stuff to give 'em." The whole propaganda presentation (with the exception of two recent broadcasts, one by Colonel Symonds and one by Frank Owen) is as dead as a door nail.

In these times propaganda is not only meant to inform and explain, but also to arouse and inflame, to show the people what Fascism means in all its appalling brutality, and to put it over in such a way that those who listen, not only believe it, but want to go out and do something about it after they have heard you speak.

The material for such a presentation is in Britain; it is in the deeds of the R.A.F., the men at sea, both naval and merchant service alike, in the army, in the anti-aircraft defences, in the mines, mills and workshops, in the fields, in the experiences of the ordinary men and women going about their daily life and duties. Even the Russian news and all its potentialities (perhaps it explains the reason why) is read in such a way as to convey the impression that those who read are afraid either of spoiling their voice production or soiling their hands by handling the paper on which the script is written.

Let some of the foreign refugees from Fascism tell of their experience before they escaped: let some effort be made to win over some of the prisoners of war now in Britain and get them on the B.B.C.

Let skilled workmen come and tell what they think could be done to increase production; let some of the women in the powder filling factories give a description of their work, the risk entailed, the menace it is to their health, and then contrast this with the idle dames crowding the posh shops and streets in the West Ends of our great cities: the atmosphere would soon be created for getting all these tens of thousands of idlers into the factories without any compunction or further praying for them to come and lend a hand.

Let some lad home from convoy work tell of what it means or some airman forced down and taking refuge in his Carley raft and drifting about for days before being rescued, tell of his feelings, fears and hopes. In other words, propaganda means bringing the war home to all people. Only in this manner shall we show we are not living in a dream world of war, but that all have a part to play, all something to do, and then all will be prepared to do something; and where they are not, the rest of the people will be in a fighting mood that will soon settle that problem for them.

It is time a start was made in this direction; time to break through this closed corporation of the B.B.C., and have propaganda put over in such a way and with such content that the people as a whole are roused as never in their lives to an understanding of what is at stake, what they have to do, and when they have to do it.

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If any doubts arise as to whether such a policy as this really needs to be carried out, we have only to think of what is going on in the Soviet Union at the present time. There they are putting their all into the fight. Not a single British civilian, if he is honest with himself, can say that we are doing the same.

The Labour movement especially has now the urgent and solemn duty of undertaking a new mobilisation of the British people, one that will succeed in welding and strengthening the national front of all the people and in this way giving reality to any victory campaign.

The Labour movement, representing as it does the decisive sections of the organised workers, is in a position of special responsibility in the present situation. What it proposes is listened to with special interest by all that it embraces in its various organisations. For the more the workers are roused to a political conviction of what is at stake, and the splendid new perspective of victory held out by the existence of the Anglo-Soviet Alliance, the more effective will be their actions in ridding Britain of all those things that are retarding the full united efforts of the whole nation.

Time and experience have brought the British and Soviet people together, they will also yet bring all political parties in the Labour movement together. Until they do, we Communists will spare no effort to fulfil our duties towards the British and Soviet people.

Neither will we allow any foul slanders about the Communist Party or so-called invidious comparisons about the difference between working with Russian Communists and British Communists, lead to any slackening in our activities. We are aware that for many who now are so fulsome in their praises of the Russian Communists, there are in reality only good Communists either when they have been killed on the battlefield or are in the front ranks of the fight still going on on a battlefield of nearly two thousand miles.

We know that whether it be on the battlefield, the factory, or in any effort aimed at beating Hitler the British Communists will not lag behind the example set to them by the Communists of the Soviet Union, as we are equally proud that if there is unrest in every Nazi-occupied country in Europe it is Communists who are leading this unrest, Communists against whom the death penalty in every one of these countries is levelled, marking them out as Hitler's most dangerous foes.

The position in the Soviet Union has not been dealt with in any detail, but the emphasis laid on the situation in Britain and the tasks that confront every one of us here. But we should get added enthusiasm for carrying out these tasks by understanding the character of the sacrifices that are now being made by the entire people of the Soviet Union.

We know that already thousands of tanks, aeroplanes, guns and almost one million of the flower of Soviet citizens have been destroyed. We know that millions have lost their homes and habitations, we know that the policy of the scorched earth is being relentlessly applied wherever Hitler threatens to advance.

Consider the feelings of a group of Soviet peasants, getting ready to destroy with their own hands their homes, villages, and crops, to kill the cattle they cannot get away from the hands of the Fascist marauders. They have ploughed and sown, and when the grain was ripening to harvest and it was impossible to reap it all and get it safely stored away, these peasants have set out deliberately to set fire to miles of smiling cornfields. Bread and life have been burnt in order that we too in Britain may live.

Consider the feelings of Soviet workers waiting to blow up a vital railway bridge that spans a great river. The last Soviet troops have marched across, the engineers get ready, the train of dynamite is already laid in preparation, a Soviet dive bomber is overhead ready to drop its bombs in case there is any accident in the firing of the dynamite. Then up that great bridge goes in smoke and ruin. What must the feelings of those workers be as they stand and watch that take place ?

Consider what the Soviet workers who blew up Dnieprostroi and the Soviet people felt like when this masterpiece of socialist construction was blown up, the socialist achievement of a project on which American technicians advised the Czar's government "that men were not born who could carry such a thing through."

Now it has gone rather than it should fall into Hitler's hands and help him prepare the way for launching all he has got against Britain.

Think of all that Leningrad means to the Soviet people. Its history, its glorious record in every struggle against Czarism —fittingly it was named years ago "The Red Heart of Russia." Before the Russian workers won power, almost

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every street and factory of St. Petersburg, as it was known then, was marked with the blood and sacrifice of its workers. In 1917 it was renamed Petrograd, and later it was given the highest honour that any city in the world has ever received or can ever receive—to be called Leningrad after the great leader Lenin.

Leningrad will be defended to the last inch. Every street and every house will be defended. Every man, woman and child able to take up arms, throw up barricades, build fortifications, make the weapons of war, will proudly take their part in this bloody struggle.

The world will stand amazed at the type of men and women who will reveal themselves in the course of this struggle. Against the devastating roar of the dive bombers, the screech of falling bombs, the crash of tank against tank,, the explosion of shot and shell, the battle will go on.

Working men and women like those to be found in any factory or street in Glasgow, London, Manchester or Newcastle will be fighting to defend themselves and us.

When has the world seen the like of this before? Never. It ought to sear itself into the consciousness of every British man or woman who has a heart that still can feel or a mind that still can think. It puts shame to all our efforts, our difficulties and our misgivings. It should steel us all to a readiness to do anything that can prove we are worthy of being partners in the Anglo-Soviet Alliance, it should rouse us to white hot anger that there are any who dare talk of "letting the Russians fight our battles for us," or "let the Nazis and Communists wipe each other out," and make sleep impossible until we have driven such scoundrels and traitors from public life and positions who ever and wherever they may be.

Let me repeat what are the most urgent tasks that every section of the labour movement in particular should now be endeavouring to fulfil. To drive home the terrible urgency of the present stage of the war crisis; the need for intensifying supplies for the Soviet Union and the creation of the Second Front; the ruthless elimination of every factor retarding the development of Britain's productive resources to their fullest limits. The removal from all government positions of pro-Fascists and failures in office. Complete overhaul of the whole propaganda machinery of the government. The adoption of a real policy of friendship with Ireland and India, such as ending the economic blockade against Ireland, and the release of the political prisoners in India.

Organising the distribution of food supplies in such a way that the workers can be convinced that no inequalities exist, and that workers in heavy industries get the amount of food necessary to be able to perform their tasks. Organising better transport facilities for workers to and from their work. Improving the conditions of the dependants of the men in the armed forces. Tightening up all existing air raid precautions. Easing the heavy burdens imposed by present methods and rates of income tax deductions from the wages of the workers.

Increasing the wages of the lower paid workers and opposing schemes whereby wages are fixed by Government decree. Lifting the ban on the *Daily Worker*, so that this mighty weapon of the working class shall daily play its part in the effective mobilisation of the people.

Strengthening the government so as to give the fullest confidence to the people, and ensure their prompt response to every measure necessary to give full effect to the Anglo-Soviet Alliance and the winning of the war against Hitler.

The Labour Movement to take the immediate initiative by organising the campaign that can see this policy is put into operation.

Such a campaign could create that activity and enthusiasm, spirit of sacrifice and unconquerable will to victory, that would rid the world for ever of the filth and villainy of Fascism.

Let us be sure by our own work we set the example.

VERY URGENTLY NEEDED

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The Revolt in Europe

The Struggle of the Peoples under Hitler's Yoke

by JOHN KNIGHT

A GREAT struggle is taking place on the continent of Europe between the oppressed peoples and their oppressors, German Fascism and its satellites in many States. Both sides are fighting for a "New Order" in Europe—but in a very different sense. German Fascism and Mussolini, Petain and Franco, General Antonescu and King Boris and Marshal Mannerheim, Quisling in Norway. Mussert and De Man in the Low Countries are fighting for the victory of brute force and ruthless exploitation, of slavery and knavery, that is to say for the victory of barbarism. The peoples are fighting for the victory of freedom and culture, of economic and national security, that is: of humanity. While Hitler and his satellites are the enemy of the peoples of the continent and also the enemy of the Soviet Union and Great Britain, nay the enemy of mankind—the peoples of the continent are the allies of the Soviet and the British peoples, the allies of all free States and peoples.

The invincibility of German Fascism is a myth. But the great might and power of German Fascism is a terrible reality. German Fascism does not defer building a new order in Europe "until final victory is achieved." From the very first day of its existence it began to build up this new order, first of all in Germany, then in Austria and Czechoslovakia, and then in all the countries conquered during the present war, including Spain and Italy. Europe is being economically rebuilt—according to the requirements of German monopoly capitalism.

In some parts of Europe industrial development is being stopped and agriculture is beginning to resume the place it had fifty or a hundred years ago when capitalism was in its infancy and early adolescence. In other parts only those industries are developed which are useful as background for military bases. In some parts of Europe the big landowners are pleased with the arrival of Fascist "economic planners," e.g., in Rumania and Bulgaria, where the Nazis guarantee them the sale of their surplus stocks. In other parts big industrialists believe that the future will bring large and steady profits (e.g., in Holland, where the monopolistic collaboration between certain German and Dutch industrialists has always been close); in others again both landowners as well as big industrialists are either contented (this applies largely to France) or discontented (as in Norway) with the new Nazi economic order.

In some parts of Europe German Fascism plans a cataclysmic upheaval (e.g., in Western Poland and in the Baltic), lands which are to be colonized by Germans for the Reich; in others it provides only a relatively small number of Germans for key positions of government administration (e.g., Denmark). Some parts of Europe are regarded as German colonies, while others are reduced merely to the status of a dominion.

In some parts of Europe cultural institutions are ruthlessly destroyed (e.g., Poland, the Baltic States, Czechoslovakia) while in others their freedom is only "restricted"—the method of slow suffocation. Some parts of Europe have been under the heel of German Fascism for more than eight years—other parts "only" for slightly over one year. All this makes for unity as well as for variety in the struggle of the peoples against German Fascism and its satellites: Unity in so far as all the peoples want to destroy German Fascism—variety in so far as the conditions under which this struggle takes place are different in almost every country of Europe.

In France a very considerable part of the ruling class is collaborating with German Fascism. Petain is not a quisling. Petain is the representative of a considerable part of French finance capital, of heavy industry and the Banque de France, of army and navy officers, of investors in the French colonial empire, of people with vested interests in the administration of the State. Some of the "immortals" of the Academie Francaise, famous men and women in the world of music and the

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theatre, sport and science, noblemen as well as trade union leaders have joined the camp of Petain. Men prominent in the church and in industry and agriculture are "planning" a new order for France together with Petain and the German Ambassador Abetz.

Within France itself, the principal *organised* oppositional group is that of the Communists, while at the same time there is the widespread movement of de Gaulle, which in the French colonies, in Great Britain and the United States, already forms a well-organised opposition. Half of France is under direct German military occupation, half is under indirect German and under direct French Fascist rule. The struggle of the French people under the leadership of the French Communist Party is directed against the German oppressors as well as against a very considerable part of the French bourgeoisie. The forces of opposition have been very much depleted through the large number of prisoners taken by the German army; the organisation of the opposition has suffered severely through the flight of millions in May and June last year; through the deportation of many workers to Germany, and through the cordon which separates occupied and unoccupied France. And yet, in spite of these difficult conditions, the opposition not only grows in numbers but acts with ever increasing boldness. Barely a year after the defeat of France the most prominent traitors in the trade union of the French miners failed in their attempt to secure re-election to their trade union offices. About four months ago, trade union organisations of every political creed in Toulouse joined in making representations to the authorities, demanding better living and working conditions and democratic rights. Just a year after the defeat of France about 50,000 miners and metal workers struck for better living conditions. Activity increased after the Fascist aggression against the Soviet Union. In August the final dissolution of the French Chamber of Deputies and Senate was answered by the formation of a Rump Parliament in opposition to the Petain government. Thousands of workers have been arrested in recent weeks because of Communist activity, because of oppositional work among the German as well as the French (Petain) authorities. The "red suburbs" of Paris were combed for workers known for their political activity while minor raids were made in other industrial cities, such as Lille, Nancy and St. Etienne. The workers answered by intensified sabotage and in the arms factory of St. Etienne a riot broke out, a pitched battle taking place between the workers on the one side and the police and military on the other. The number of active members of the opposition grows daily, and the drive for a united national front, started by the Communists, becomes more and more effective. The contact between the various groups and individuals, between the Communists and the Trade Unionists and Socialists and de Gaullists becomes closer. When aeroplanes from this country have flown low over France the returning pilots often report having seen people in the streets and fields of France giving them signs of welcome. But these pilots have understood only half the message the people of France want to convey to them. The other half reads: when are you going to send over your army to beat together with us the German Fascists who have invaded our country, who are robbing us, who want to enslave us?

Conditions in Czechoslovakia are quite different from those in France. True, there also there is a government of bourgeoisie "native" elements with social-democrats in the administration. But the majority of the Czech bourgeoisie, and especially the masses of the people, are opposed to the Hitler regime. On the other hand, the national question, or rather the question of the three chief nationalities, of the Czechs, the Slovaks and the Sudeten Germans, plays a very important role—a problem which is almost non-existent in France. Slovakia has become an "independent" State under Hitler with, however, only a small minority of the bourgeoisie on the side of Hitler, while the Sudeten-territory with a largely pro-Hitler group has become part of "greater Germany." And yet, at the end of October and in the beginning of November last year, it was in Slovakia that the first great war-strike took place in a country dominated by the Nazis. Furthermore, this was not merely a strike of miners who wanted higher wages; the miners who struck were largely Slovaks and Germans with a smaller number of Czech and Polish miners. Thus, for the people of Czechoslovakia this strike became not only a symbol of the great advance the opposition against Hitler had made but also a symbol of how unity among the nationalities brings nearer the day of final delivery from the "Nazi occupants."

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The underground movement in Czechoslovakia is very strong and well organised, and it increased in strength after Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union.

In contrast to France where the Communists have the only well-organised underground movement, in Czechoslovakia there is also a bourgeois (Benes) centre organising a certain degree of resistance. The various opposition movements are not working without contact, in fact, their fight against the Hitler and Hacha regime has since the attack on the Soviet Union become, under Communist leadership, more and more co-ordinated and thus gains in strength and range. The Communist Party which even before Munich had become the leading force in the fight against Hitler is to-day foremost in the active opposition of which we hear almost daily through news of sabotage actions or—unfortunately—through news of arrests. What we do not hear is that the place of the arrested comrade is at once taken by another who can often continue the work with a larger circle of reliable friends who have been recruited following upon the good work of the arrested comrade. The weapon of fear and terror in the hands of the Nazis, though still effective, is getting blunted.

Yugoslavia was the last victim to be conquered by the German army—and here resistance is greatest. Parts of the regular army and a vast number of guerilla fighters have retired to the mountains and forests, and various parts of the country are almost "independent revolutionary territories." The armed forces have the full support of the population and thus are able to make sallies into "enemy territory" to cause railway accidents, to capture small outposts of the occupation army, to harry transport columns and to spread the fire of civil war from one part of the country to the other. Whenever it is extinguished by the strong military expeditions of the occupation forces it catches light again at an unexpected place. Thus Yugoslavia at present gives very great help indeed to the Soviet Union by keeping a not inconsiderable occupation army, lately materially increased, away from the great battles in the East. Recently the guerilla fighters held a national conference in the Bosnian mountains to survey results, exchange experiences and co-ordinate their activities.

In Norway and in Austria, in Holland and Belgium, in Italy and Denmark, in Spain and Bulgaria, in Greece and in Rumania—everywhere the problems of how to fight best and who can be won immediately for the fight assume a different character. But in all these countries there is only one common aim: to expel from the country the Nazi conquerors, the barbarians from abroad, and the traitors who disgrace the name of their own country. In some countries almost the whole people—the masses of the workers and peasants, the liberal professions, the dignitaries of the church, the judicial authorities and the universities are fighting together for the freedom of their country against the Nazi-regime. In others a not inconsiderable part of the bourgeoisie has come to some kind of an arrangement with the Nazis and the anti-Hitler front is somewhat smaller. In some countries, in parts of Yugoslavia and in parts of Poland, there is guerilla warfare—in others the opposition is not yet able to carry the fight so far—in some countries large strikes have taken place, for instance in Holland and Belgium, in other countries sabotage has reached such a degree that the Nazis forcibly evacuated the population from certain districts, for instance in Norway. Everywhere new methods of fighting the Nazi tyranny are found and age-old methods are revived. Everywhere the people are fighting their own battle for liberation. At the same time they watch full of hope and with intense admiration the fight of the Red Army against the army of German Fascism; they feel the bond of unity which binds closely together all those who are fighting the Hitler regime; they wait eagerly for the opening up of the second front in the West so that they may form the connecting link between the Red Army in the East and the British army in the West.

A special place among the peoples oppressed by the Hitler regime is taken by the German people. They have suffered longest from Fascism, the German opposition feels in the strongest degree the responsibility devolving on all progressive forces to work as hard as possible for the overthrow of the Hitler regime. Their task is the most difficult, and the most urgent. If the German people succeed, the task of the other oppressed nations will be much easier. If the German people fail, their fate will be a cruel one because of the terrific losses they will have to suffer. Tens of thousands of Germans are sacrificed every week by the Hitler regime at the front in the East for the most shameless war

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ever waged. Never was there such a field of dishonour upon which an army was sacrificed by the most cruel and criminal regime in history. But rarely has any people been set so difficult a task! Hitler does not represent a tiny minority of the German people. There are hundreds of thousands of Germans, in fact more than a million, who benefit from the crimes of Hitlerism. These do not include only the big industrialists and the big landowners, the chief executives in the administration of State and municipalities, the military chiefs and the heads of the administration of conquered and subjected countries. They include also several hundreds of thousands of S.S. men, picked torturers and plunderers in Germany and in the conquered territories; also hundreds of thousands of middle and upper functionaries in the administration of Germany and the occupied countries, lesser leaders in their own right in Germany but especially in the occupied territories where the native population is regarded as inferior in race and right and treated correspondingly. Eight years of oppression, of long hours of work and poor food, of arrests and decapitations have made nervous wrecks of many or at least deadened their political, nay their human consciousness. Eight years of Fascist barbarism have, in fact, made barbarians of many hundreds of thousands of Germans, have killed the spirit of many more hundreds of thousands and have misled millions. No people could have lived under the conditions under which the German people has been damned to live for eight years without such terrible effects being felt, without such spiritual wounds having been inflicted.

Such are the odds with which the active German opposition has to reckon. But against these odds there are wonderful advantages—not advantages as compared with conditions in other countries, but advantages as compared with former times when the task before the people was to overthrow its government and ruling class. There is the all important fact of the existence and active and organised work of the German Communist Party, with a membership trained in many years of underground work; there are hundreds of thousands of former Social-democrats and Trade Unionists active and often working together with the Communists; there are many thousands who eight years ago were not interested in politics but who have gone through the cruel school of Hitlerism and who have learned the importance of active work in the opposition—workers and peasants, house wives and technicians, soldiers and intellectuals, both in town and in the country.

What have the members of the German Opposition done since the war with the Soviet Union began? What are they doing to-day? What can we expect them to do in the next few months? News is scarce from Germany, scarcer than from other countries under Nazi domination. But this does not mean there is nothing to report from Germany. Germany is with the exception of France the only country from which we have had, since the beginning of the war against the Soviet Union, news of a strike in an important industry and more than that: news of a political strike in one of the politically most advanced parts of Germany, the strike of the Hamburg dockyard and shipbuilding workers in July for the publication of lists of fallen soldiers at the East front. There had been very much uncertainty and disquiet about the losses of the German army in the East. The wireless had to warn the women against "plaguing" the authorities for news from husbands and sons. The papers were forbidden to publish more than 25 death notices per day. But millions feel the doom of the Hitler regime in their bones and the authority of the regime is becoming undermined. The strain on the nerves of the people is a terrible one.

There is much sabotage and concrete evidence of this sabotage has been reported from the Soviet front where the rate of dud shells is far higher than normal. The number of victims in the opposition is large. The Nazi press gives a figure of 500 decapitations alone in July. But why, some people ask, are the Germans not deserting *en masse* to the Soviet Army? These people know little of the conditions in the army. Every unit is filled with agents of the military police. As Carlyle wrote: "Insurrection is difficult: each individual uncertain even of his distant neighbours, what strength is in him and what strength is against him; certain only that in case of failure, his individual portion is the gallows."

Desertion by individual anti-Fascist soldiers is discouraged because the task of every member of the opposition is to persuade as many soldiers as possible for a joint desertion. Organised desertion takes time, and conditions are not yet ripe. The soldiers are well fed, well

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clothed and are promised large bounty "after the defeat of the Soviet Union." Though the losses in the German army have been terrific, the army has up to now marched only forward. There has been no major defeat yet. Never in the history of mankind have there been yet major desertions in an army which has not been beaten. At the same time the spirit of the German troops is not what it was. Like the women at home and the workers in the factories their feelings are uneasy, they are not sure of themselves as they were in former campaigns. The number of desertions, though on the whole small, is increasing.

A report of the Soviet High Command, September 3rd, says for instance: "On the south-western front 73 soldiers of the 80th regiment of the 95th German infantry division gave themselves up. Before coming over to the Soviet troops, the German soldiers killed their company commander who was driving them forward under threat of shooting them. One of these soldiers said: 'We are tired of this accursed war, brought about by Hitler's thirst for power and for world domination'."

More and more letters from home and from the front are being stopped by the censorship because they do not "emanate the right spirit." The feeling that there is a gigantic coalition of free states and free peoples to which the German people are admitted too to the extent to which they are fighting Hitler is being spread through the German opposition which receives full confirmation from the Soviet wireless. The heavy pressure of Fascist dictatorship forces the fire of revolt and revolution still to burn underground, and the glow of this fire is not yet visible on the sky spanning the world of free peoples. But the tongues of the flame are seeking for weak spots and the first reverses of the German army, reverses consisting of stalemate or even retreats on the front, reverses consisting in large scale revolts in the occupied territories, or simply the breaking of the strain somewhere on the home front, will send quickly the flames of resistance to the surface.

True, the German opposition is still only the invisible ally of the free States and peoples. But that does not mean that nothing is happening below the black clouds of Fascism. The German people, the German opposition are working hard to clear the sky, to clear the earth from the scourge of Fascism. They know that the Soviet Army in fighting off the aggressor is giving at the same time help and hope as they have never received it before to the anti-Fascists in Germany. And as the peasants and workers in France and in Belgium and in Holland are expecting the opening up of a second front in the West by the British army, so the German opposition also is hoping for such an event in order to hasten the downfall of the regime from which they have suffered longer than any other people on the continent.

While each of the peoples under Fascist dictatorships are fighting for their freedom from foreign oppression and for the right to determine their future for themselves, bonds of closest friendship are being formed between them. Common suffering has brought the peoples of Europe closer to one another. Daily the German papers report arrests and prison sentences imposed on Germans who have befriended French and Polish prisoners of war. Age-long difficulties between Sudeten-Germans and Czechs are ironed out in the common fight against Hitler. Danes and Dutch and Frenchmen deported to Germany for skilled work in armament factories are being helped by German workers to bear their hard life or even to flee back to their own country. German refugees from Nazi oppression in this country working together side by side with British workers are a living example of the unity of the peoples against Fascism.

Most important of all, a congress of representatives of all Slav nations took place in Moscow on August 10th and 11th symbolising the solidarity of the peoples of Eastern Europe in their fight for freedom against the Fascist dictatorship. The conference was opened by the well-known Russian writer Alexie Tolstoy. He began, "I appeal to all Slavs, Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Bulgarians, Slovenes, Ruthenians—all who speak the fraternal languages of the single Slav root, all who once composed a united group of kindred tribes and who waged a battle for independence, for their national culture and for the right to pursue their peaceful existence. The hour has struck when the Slavonic peoples must unite to be liberated from the Hitler yoke once and for all. Our unity shall be the unity of equals . . .

We are not intent on domination nor do we wish to play a leading role with regard to other nations. Resolutely and unreservedly we refute the very idea of

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Pan-Slavism as an utterly reacionary fraud, profoundly hostile to the idea of the equality of the peoples and to the lofty aims of national development of the states and nations."

He was followed by General Janushaitis of Poland and then by speakers from each of the Slav peoples. These speeches, calling for war and revolt against Fascism, had an electrifying affect throughout all the Slav communities of Europe.

In this new way the basis for a new and better order is being built in Europe. Fascism is still on top. But below the surface a new kind of life is beginning to form, a new society is being created, the fundaments of a new Europe are being laid. There are not many cracks yet in the Fascist system and little light is reaching yet this new formation. But those who are building it have learned to live and to work underground and they know that with constant endeavour and by giving everything they have they will succeed in throwing off the yoke which still keeps them down—the yoke of Fascist barbarism.

The part in the fight to be played by the people of Britain now becomes of the utmost importance. These events in Europe are not to be looked at as through a telescope. The people of this country have to act so that there grows up closer and closer the links between this country and the struggle against Hitler's yoke. The issue of the war depends on the character of the war. To the extent that it becomes a people's war in Britain, that every effort is made both to create a second front in the West and the fullest use of the national resources at home : to that extent there will come a strengthening of the struggle in continental Europe and the response in increased efforts to build *a third front* within Hitler's "New Order," and the building of a common front of all the peoples of Europe. But it is for the people of Britain to realise this and to take the necessary steps.

THE
"CRISIS OF THE BRITISH PEOPLE"
It is hoped that "The Crisis of the British People" by R. Palme Dutt will be ready in November. Look out for an announcement next month.

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How To Increase War Production

III.—Shop Stewards and Production

by WALTER SWANSON *(Convenor, Napier's Shop Stewards)*

AS the war develops into its third year, the gigantic battles on the Eastern Front demonstrate more than ever the importance of the army in the rear—the War Workers. Masses of tanks, aeroplanes and guns are being employed with tremendous losses on both sides in men and material. The splendid equipment and fighting morale of the Red Army has for the first time faced Hitler's armies with real resistance, matched only by the heroism of the whole Soviet people, toiling night and day to make the tanks, planes and guns to defeat the Nazi armies. This glorious example of a united nation battling against Hitler is profoundly stirring the working men and women of Britain to fulfil the Government pledge to give full aid to our Soviet Allies.

British war industry has a tremendous responsibility in the battle against Hitler. Only the complete mobilisation of all available resources, machinery, material and labour for maximum output of ships, tanks, planes, guns and essential war material can adequately meet the needs of to-day.

Would anyone in the Government dare to say that we are fully mobilised? Are all steps being taken to rapidly achieve this end? These are questions of vital importance to every man, woman and child in these islands—and their very lives depend upon the answer.

In every sphere of war industry the Trade Unions have made big contributions to increased output and higher efficiency. The anti-Fascist feeling of the workers has been a big factor in getting things done in spite of difficulties. In this respect a very important part is played particularly in aircraft and engineering by the Shop Stewards. These men and women are the accredited representatives of the unions at the point of production, elected by their fellow workers to ensure that work is carried on under good conditions with agreed wages, etc., in other words, union officials at their place of work.

The co-ordinating body which has played a big part in making this aspect of Trade Unionism stronger in the Engineering and Allied Trades is the Shop Stewards National Council.

Recently, conferences of Shop Stewards have been held in many parts of the country and already reports show that taken together the meetings represented 330,600 workers in vital industries. This will give some indication, though inadequate, of the strength of the Shop Stewards movement. Under the leadership of the National Council these conferences pledged themselves to a policy which can make a big contribution to increased output.

However, before dealing concretely with this policy, there are certain conclusions which can be drawn from the experiences all over the country. Statements made in Parliament that we are only working to 75% capacity are amply borne out by the men from the workshops. Again there are still many employers and workers who are living in the halcyon days of peace and pursue their own interests to the detriment of their fellows. This must end! The A.E.U. recently sent out a circular to its Shop Stewards on production, asking questions which would enable this important union to help to solve some of the problems in industry. The employers showed their unwillingness to co-operate by the fact that the Employers Federation circularised their constituents warning them against co-operating with the unions on this vital issue.

The Select Committee on National Expenditure in its Thirty-fifth Report has made a number of important recommendations. The Committee asks the production departments to fix a maximum of hours to be worked, and to enforce them on all their contractors. It also recommends one free day per week for all workers, but says the plant should, where possible, be kept running seven days per week. This would involve a rota system to ensure that the workers

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who wanted an equal share of the Sunday work could get it. The Committee also recommends that factories shall work twenty-four hours per day as soon as the labour force is available. These particular recommendations of the Select Committee, unlike their views on piece-rates, we can heartily endorse.

The Select Committee, on the ground that labour in war industries is not being used to the best advantage and that there are many war factories capable of employing more workers than they do, makes still further recommendations. They condemn the notorious "cost plus" system: and show that lack of output is partly due to bad transport arrangements. On this they propose that the Regional Transport Commissioners should have power to fix the times at which transport should run, in order that war workers (who should have priority passes), may have the best service. They also recommend rapid repair of existing vehicles so that they shall be ready for the winter.

The Select Committee make two other suggestions which could (provided their views on piece-rates were not put into operation) prove of great value, namely: that graphic records be displayed in the workshop of progress made and that prizes and distinctions be made to workers displaying exceptional initiative.

In spite of the tremendous role of the Trade Unions many big employers on Government work (as was shown by a famous case on the Humber) still refuse to recognise Trade Unionism. Other employers continue to put profits before production. Every anti-union employer is an ally of Hitler.

Mr. Bevin when he was first appointed Minister of Labour said that the Shop Stewards were an integral part of the Government. Well, if this is so, we have had to wait very long to see the signs of it, as far as the Government is concerned. Very shortly, however, the National Council of Shop Stewards will be calling a national conference: when it meets on the 19th October it will no doubt represent something like a million workers in munitions apart from other trades. What will come of it? The Shop Stewards will tackle production in the following way.

1. *Win the workers in every factory for maximum effort.*
2. *Demand the right to play their part in solving production problems through means of Joint Production Committees in every factory, with workers and management represented.*
3. *Get the workers to work the maximum hours compatible with health and efficiency.*
4. *Demand guarantees to keep the existing piece-work prices, while advocating increased production, with Government action against employers who break their pledge.*
5. *To get adequate transport and canteen facilities for the workers to enable them to maintain efficient working.*
6. *To help the women coming into industry to play their full part by ensuring fullest co-operation by male workers in training. By advocating equal pay for equal work, time off for shopping, adequate welfare facilities and creches for children, which can make women really fit to do the job.*
7. *To get effective Area Committees of Shop Stewards which will co-ordinate activity and with the help of the District Committees of Unions enable union members of Regional Advisory Boards, etc., to bring issues before official Government Committees.*
8. *To make the NEW PROPELLOR with its many thousands of readers into a paper that speaks for the millions of war workers and leads the fight for higher production.*

This policy means a sharp change in the relations between workers and employers. No doubt it will meet with opposition in certain quarters. Opposition will be swept aside. The Shop Stewards are the trusted leaders in the factories and can help to release all the initiative and energy of the British worker for the glorious job that has to be done. With the support of the workers they tackle the job with no axe to grind; and if the employers and the Government enter into the job with the same spirit miracles can be achieved.

An example of what can be done was shown on the Merseyside on Friday the 12th September, when 3,500 Liverpool Shipyard workers attended an after-work production meeting called by their Yard Committee. The report of the meeting is as follows:

> Through a resolution they added their voice to the demand for the opening of a front in the West and the removal of Moore-Brabazon and all others holding

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similar opinions from positions of responsibility. The meeting pledged itself to "work as never before to remove every obstacle that stands in the way of the fullest production to make possible an offensive by the British forces against Hitler's hordes."

Addressing the meeting, Leo McGree, A.S.W. organiser, said, "We are entitled to say in industry, it would be the workers who would suffer most if Hitler won the war. If we lie down and let the Russians do the fighting then we are in for terrible times, but if everyone, including the Government, managements and workers, buckles in, then we shall secure Britain against Fascism."

The meeting called on the yard's stewards to organise a production conference covering the whole shipbuilding industry in Merseyside and sent greetings to Leningrad shipyard workers. 500 copies of Harry Pollitt's "Call for Arms" were sold. The meeting was, with the management's permission, held in the yard itself.

In other parts of the country and in other industries similar activities can be undertaken.

On the labour of the British working men and women the whole future of humanity depends. Hitler's defeat is no easy task. Give these men and women in the factories real encouragement by taking their organisation into the councils of production in every factory and the battle can be won.

This is the perspective that lies ahead of the Shop Stewards movement, in unity with the Soviet and American people. Our endeavour will bring victory.

Dialectical Materialism and Modern Science

IV.— Negation of the Negation

by J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.

ENGELS, in his statements of dialectical principles, enunciated that of the negation of a negation separately from that of the unity of opposites. Lenin brought them into relation, by pointing out that the unity of opposites commonly leads to struggle. Where we can follow the detail of this struggle, we find that the formula of the negation of the negation often expresses the final phase, which leads to the sudden "emergence" of novelty, with remarkable accuracy, as in Marx's description of the transition to socialism, "The expropriators are expropriated."

We do not know enough of the detail of how unstable atoms or molecules undergo sudden change to say how, if at all, this principle applies. But it certainly applies to the familiar irreversible physical changes such as the breaking of a stick or metal bar which is overbent, or a rope or rubber band which is overstretched. Under no strains, or slight strains, the molecules of a solid are commonly arranged in a system of minimum energy (like a stone lying at the bottom of a bowl instead of being perched in a less stable position). They may be arranged in crystals, as in cast iron, or fibres as in wood. Now a strain such as bending or pulling upsets this arrangement. The stable configuration of molecules is negated. In its early stages this process is reversible. The solid regains its former shape if the force on it is removed. But at a certain point the negation is abruptly negated. The solid breaks, and each part returns to a stable configuration of molecules. There may of course be intermediate stages of permanent set. This is of course a crude example. In other cases the negation of the molecular arrangement leads, after a more or less chaotic period, to a new one. Thus when ice near its melting point is compressed, it first melts, that is to say the molecules lose their orderly arrangement, but at about 6,000 atmospheres it passes into another solid

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form, ice-VI, in which the molecules are more densely packed than in ice-I, the well-known form.

A beautiful example of a negated negation is found in the modern geological theory of the formation of certain mountain ranges, such as the Alps. These occur in regions of folding where the earth's crust, by cooling or continental movement, is under lateral pressure. The first effect of this pressure is to cause a downward folding, such as occurs, for example, off many of the coasts of the Pacific, where there are deep oceanic troughs. These are filled with sediments which form rock. As the folding progresses these sediments are brought up again above sea level. Being lighter than the granite of which the continents are largely composed, they can form stable mountain ranges of considerable height, whereas a range consisting of heavier rocks would gradually sink when the mountain-building forces no longer acted. Thus the down-fold, or geosynclinal, is transformed into its opposite, a mountain range.

But the negation of the negation is most strikingly shown in the field of biology. The most primitive organisms merely grow and divide. If they break down the large molecules of their bodies into smaller molecules which are excreted, this is a negation of their life process. But in the higher animals the breakdown of relatively large molecules, such as glycogen and adenosintriphosphoric acid, is the immediate source of the energy of muscular movement, which enables them to get food which is quite unavailable to the simplest organisms. The negation of growth thus negates itself.

The evolutionary process depends on the struggle between variation and selection. As Engels pointed out, either may be taken as positive. However, the following treatment is perhaps the most consonant with modern biological ideas. Normally like produces like, or nearly so, whether in growth, as when one potato or geranium produces many vegetatively, or in sexual reproduction. More accurately, like responds alike to a similar environment. Some variation within the progeny of a single organism or pair is merely due to the different responses of fundamentally similar organisms to different nurtures. Some, including sex differences in most species, is due to hybridity, that is to say to the fact that the original organism considered, or one of them, was formed by the union of germ-cells whose nuclei were unlike. But some variation is due to mutation, a radical change which may produce entirely novel types, and which leads to hybridity in later generations, and thus furnishes the raw material for all kinds of heritable variations. Mutation is in fact the negation of heredity. The novel types produced by mutation very rarely prove fitter than the original type. So natural selection generally eliminates them, though occasionally one may spread through a species and transform it. The negation is usually negated. But this does not give us a uniform species. On the contrary, as Tsetverikov first showed, and Dubinin and others, including Gordon, Philip, Spurway and Street in my own laboratory, have proved in greater detail, it leads to a state of affairs where the species is permeated with small variations, more or less harmful one at a time, but sometimes beneficial in suitable combinations, or potentially useful if external conditions change. Fisher believes that the struggle between mutation and selection causes slow changes in a species which are not due to environmental pressure, and thus gives an internal cause for evolution such as has been attributed to vital urges and the like. It certainly makes species more variable and plastic than it would otherwise be.

Evolution proceeds by the same method in many details. Every major change of environment negates the former normal conditions of the organism. Thus when our fish ancestors came out of water they could not move quickly on land. They breathed with difficulty, saw badly, were subject to rapid temperature changes such as do not occur in water, and so on. It took many million years to negate these negations. They were negated by the development of such organs as legs and lungs, by large changes in the eyes, and finally by mechanisms for regulating the temperature. These when they were perfected, enabled the mammals and birds to colonize even the arctic, and rendered many other developments possible. Man has recently developed a large brain which, among other things, has cramped his teeth and bent his nasal passages. The teeth and nose are among the weakest and most readily infected parts of our bodies.

Finally the negation of negation is extremely typical of the development of scientific theory and practice. Here at least Hegel was not standing on his head.

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His account of the dialectic needs far less modification in connection with human history than with nature. The dialectical development of mathematics was described by Engels. At the end of the 19th century the atomic theory in chemistry was generally accepted, though Ostwald and a few other chemists stood out. But the number of atoms in a gram was uncertain within a factor of a hundred or more. Then Thomson showed that electrons could be detached from atoms in a gas, and Rutherford that atoms broke up. This negated the atom as an "eternal brick," but made it possible to count atoms with great accuracy, since individual electrons or atomic explosions produce effects which are visible with a microscope.

We have seen how widely Marxist principles are applicable to modern science. Some scientific workers admit this, but add that Marx and Engels only formulated principles which good scientists follow instinctively. Even if this were the whole truth, their formulation would have been a very great step forward. But actually an individual scientist will often turn out to be quite dialectical in his treatment of some particular problem, say resonance energy or reflex action, but crassly mechanistic or idealistic when dealing with other questions, including his own social and economic position. For this reason every scientific worker will be aided in his work by a study of such classics as "Feuerbach," "Anti-Dühring," "Dialectics of Nature," "Materialism and Empirio-criticism," and Chap. 4 of the "History of the C.P.S.U. (B)." He must remember that they must be studied not as eternal truths, but in their historical setting, not as dogmas, but as guides to action. If he does so he will not merely improve the quality of his research and teaching; he will find himself no longer a mere individual passively involved in the torrent of contemporary history, but actively engaged in changing society and shaping the world's future.

DOCUMENTS OF THE MONTH

Trades Union Congress

The Trades Union Congress which met in Edinburgh on the 1st-4th September marked a definite advance on the first two Congresses of the war.

The Congress took decisions upon questions (wages, prices, food, position of women, civil defence, etc.) which had a direct bearing on war economy and the problem of production: but without these more general questions being considered as a whole. On the other hand there was in the debates an emphasis on maintaining the independence of the movement and its critical outlook; while in the changed policy towards the Soviet Trade Unions and the resolution thereon there was a big step in advance. In addition the sharp division on organisational questions revealed not only a challenge to the dominant influence of the general labour unions but a readiness to face these problems anew.

For example, a motion by the National Union of Public Employees requiring the General Council to examine the organisation of Trade Unions to see whether greater effectiveness would be obtained on industrial lines, was opposed by the general labour unions: and on a vote being taken was defeated by a small majority of 2,548,000 votes to 2,384,000.

Again the proposal for re-admission to Congress of the Chemical Workers' Union (opposed amongst others by the T. & G.W.U. with 650,000 votes and by the General & Municipal Workers' Union with half a million votes) was defeated only by a narrow majority of 2,404,000 votes to 2,333,000. At a later stage when the General Council, in a supplement to its report, reaffirming the basic objections to the Fire Prevention scheme of the Home Office, declared "its emphatic view that the proposed allowances were totally inadequate, and the conviction that the scheme could not be made a success on its present basis, that it was found adversely to affect production," but recommended trade union participation in the working of the scheme, there was a reference back moved by the National Union of Railwaymen. The reference back was lost.

On the repeal of the Trade Disputes and Trade Union Act of 1927, refused by Mr. Churchill as being controversial legislation in war-time, the proposals of the General Council for minor amendment and for conciliatory discussions with representatives of the Conservative Party were accepted.

The most important decision of the Congress was that to establish an Anglo-Soviet Council. This was a reversal of the attitude of hostility which had developed over a number of years since the previous Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Council was abolished in 1927. The wording of the resolution gives scope for the development of solidarity between the Soviet and British trade unionists and for the fullest mobilisation of the British people alongside the people of the U.S.S.R. in the struggle against Hitlerite Germany. The resolution stated:

"the unalterable resolve of the British

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working class . . . . to go on with the struggle to destroy the Nazi-Fascist regime of oppression and servitude" declared "sincere satisfaction that an alliance has been formed with Soviet Russia and pays homage to the magnificent skill and unconquerable bravery of the Russian armies and people" and pledged the movement "to do all that lies in its power to enable Britain and its allies to render help to the Soviet Union."

The resolution proposed to set up: "An Anglo-Russian Trade Union Council composed of an equal number of representatives of the All-Russian Central Council of Trades Unions of the U.S.S.R. and of the British T.U.C. General Council and providing for regular meetings alternately in Russia and Great Britain for the exchange of views and information upon the problems which the Trade Union movement in each country is called upon to deal." To this was added the proviso "that there shall be no interference on questions of internal policy and organisation, which must remain the exclusive responsibility of each Body."

In the debate Mr. Jack Tanner, President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, made scathing references to a speech by Major Moore-Brabazon, Minister of Aircraft Production, and said "We will defeat any plot which might be in process of formation that will withold full and adequate aid to our Allies, and, if necessary, smash any person who is responsible for such a policy."

At the conclusion Mr. Hallsworth (N.U.D.A.W. General Secretary) was elected chairman for the next year.

Labour Research Dept. Conference

A trade union delegate conference on "What's Holding up Production?" was held at Central Hall, Westminster, on 20th September. Mr. J. H. Potts (President National Union of Railwaymen) was in the chair, and the discussion, opened by Mr. W. H. Williams (secretary, Labour Research Department), threw considerable light on the hindrances operating against the fullest possible output, and on the efforts of the trade unionists to improve production, particularly through the experience of area boards, yards and pit committees and works production conferences.

The conference was attended, according to the preliminary credentials report, by 814 delegates representing 333 trade union organisations. Amongst them were 27 delegates from trade union executives, an equal number from trade union district committees, 53 delegates from trades councils, 377 delegates from 197 trade union branches and 236 delegates from 78 shop stewards' committees.

Marx House Faculty of Science

A symposium on F. Engel's "Dialectics of Nature" and "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", held at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on 16th/17th August, was attended by about 700 persons, chiefly by professional scientists but with a considerable number of workers and soldiers. Papers were read and contributions made by Professors Haldane, Levy, Thomson, Farrington, Bernal and by Clemens Dutt, Dora Tom, J. Needham amongst others. A full report appeared in *Nature*.

BOOK REVIEWS

An Anti-Soviet Book

Russia And Ourselves. By Victor Gollancz. (Victor Gollancz, Ltd. 2/6).

On the flyleaf of this book there are printed the words: "All possible aid to the Soviet Union." Ostensibly it is pro-Soviet, essentially it is mischievously and sometimes venemously anti-Soviet. History has been re-written and plain facts distorted. Hoary slanders are trotted out with a sorrowful air of friendship and regret—a kind of it-hurts-me-more-than-it-hurts-you style.

Once again we are told that the Soviet-German Pact precipitated the war in 1939, that Stalin appeased Hitler for nearly two years, and that the Soviet Union is socialist only in "ultimate intention." Part of "The Betrayal of the Left" has been served up again in an even drearier form. This is Gollancz's contribution to the most heroic days in all history, the mighty struggle of the Soviet peoples against Fascism with its clarion call to the peoples of the entire world.

Even bourgeois publicists and politicians have recognised the objective assistance rendered to Britain by Soviet neutrality, the statesmanship of Stalin in gaining time and strengthening the strategical position of the Soviet Union, and the wisdom displayed by the Bolsheviks when they refused to link the fortunes of the Soviet people with the treacherous rulers of France and the Chamberlain gang in Britain, who had sabotaged the pact negotiations in Moscow. But not so Gollancz. He wriggles uncomfortably over these facts of history.

Gollancz bases his "appeasement" thesis on the view that the Soviet Union should have made war on Germany in 1939 instead of signing the Pact, in the expectation that the Men of Munich would have changed their spots:

> "might it not have been exceedingly difficult for Britain and France to stand aloof, even at the outset, and to 'hold the ring'."

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This childish speculation, typical of the argumentation of the book in general, is resorted to in spite of the uncontrovertible facts of history, the Fascist rottenness of the French ruling class (even worse than many of us dreamt) and the endeavours made by Chamberlain to switch the war. Finland was the highest point of this anti-Soviet policy, pursued without regard to the interests of the British people, and none will forget the mass incitement against the Soviet Union carried out in Britain by Chamberlain with the help of Transport House.

On the question of Poland, Finland, the Baltic States and Bessarabia, Gollancz is not even prepared to concede the justice of the Soviet action. Maybe it was correct, maybe it was not. Perhaps "our children's children" will be thankful for that action, perhaps not. "I must frankly say that I do not know the answer" winds up Gollancz. As in this case he can hardly contend that Britain and France would have rallied gloriously if the Soviet Union had not checkmated the Nazis, he decides to remain in a state of philosophical doubt.

In point of fact, these actions, described by Gollancz as "species of aggressions," were each a collision between Hitler and the peace policy of the Soviet Union. It was precisely these movements of the Red Army in his rear that prevented Hitler from attempting a decisive conclusion of the struggle in the West, as he himself has admitted. To use the words of Mr. Arthur Woodburn, M.P., who never writes out of sympathy to Communism:

> "Little did any of us realise that even by keeping out of the war Russia's great strength was a leaden ball on Hitler's foot which prevented him jumping on us."

One could go right through the book in this strain, nailing misrepresentations and absurdities, but one is more inclined to ask why has this stale re-hash of back numbers of the *Left News* been served up at this moment? Why all this anti-Sovietism only relieved by some gush about the heroism of the Soviet people?

These questions are put because in the present situation this book can serve only the arch-reactionaries. It insinuates doubts under the guise of friendship at a time when everything possible should be done to mobilise the people to press the Government forward and to crush those elements of the ruling class who are trying to frustrate the Anglo-Soviet Alliance. This aspect of the struggle against Fascism has apparently not occurred to Gollancz. It is not mentioned in his book, which apart from its general anti-Sovietism, also assists the arch-reactionaries by alleging that the reason for the failure to develop the second front is the "appeasement" policy of Stalin, which has enabled Hitler to conquer the continent and to prevent an invasion. It requires a Gollancz to suggest that Norway, Dunkirk, Greece and Crete should be charged up to Stalin's account, instead of to the mistakes and follies of the British ruling class.

It is also stated that "now at any rate we are wholeheartedly ready to help her." This is patently not the case. There is not much wholeheartedness in the fact that it has taken three months for British supplies to reach the Eastern front. There has been a shocking delay in the carrying out of the Pact as practically every bourgeois newspaper in the country has pointed out. Gollancz is a thousand miles to the right of the *Times*, which has led a campaign for military action against Fascism and has drawn pointed attention to the marked lack of wholehearted help to the Soviet Union.

This complacency of Gollancz, his painful anxiety to swallow official explanations and his servile thinking up of reasons for doing nothing, borders very closely on defeatism—reactionary defeatism.

For all his Left Book Clubism Gollancz is quite incapable of analysing a situation on the basis of class relationships. He makes his judgments from the standpoint of certain abstractions described by himself as of "European values," with the result that he falls an easy prey to imperialist propaganda. That is also one reason why there are so many astonishing inaccuracies in his articles. The "wholeheartedly ready" is one example; another is the reference to America being now on a "semi-war basis," which, he alleges, would not have been the case if the Communists had had their way.

Why this fantastic picture of America which conceals the necessity of a relentless fight against the Lindberghs and Hoovers? America is not on a "semi-war basis," either industrially or politically as is proven by official statistics and the divisions amongst the people caused by the propaganda of the Isolationists and pro-Fascists. This reckless reference to America is made solely in order to justify a stupid jab at the Communists, and for no other reason.

Gollancz winds up with the accustomed anti-Communist chapter, in which, he, the man who had all along blindly supported the imperialist policies which had placed the people of this country in a position of extreme danger, blandly announces that he is now willing to work with the Communists, who have always fought unremittingly for Anglo-Soviet unity, providing they do not change their policy!

One last point. Gollancz waxes very scornful at the expense of those workers who believe that the Soviet Union is a democracy and take pride in the fact that the press is in the hands of the working people. His personal attitude on this point is understandable. As an author Gollancz occupies an exceedingly favoured position. He is assured of a publisher and extensive advertising. There is, of course, no Soviet equivalent of the firm of Victor Gollancz, Ltd., and no individuals able to use personal wealth in order to grind their own political axe. Such peculiar forms of democracy disappeared with a lot of other rubbish in 1917.

WILLIAM RUST.

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The Lesson of France

The Fall of the French Republic: By D. N. Pritt, K.C., M.P. (Frederick Muller, 5/-).

At last we have a book on the Fall of France which not only puts the events of that tragic drama in their historical perspective, but gives a correct, i.e. a Marxist, picture of the whole process. During the past year a host of books have appeared dealing with one aspect or another of the catastrophe. Each of these may have contributed something to the general picture, but the majority are of no permanent value. A large proportion are purely personal narratives, full of trivial chit-chat and spiced with revelations of corruption and treachery in high places. Written under the immediate impress of events, they yet fail to convey the inner meaning of contemporary events in the way that Marx did so eloquently and profoundly for the events leading up to the 18th Brumaire, precisely because of the limited vision and class prejudices of their writers.

The special claim of Pritt's book is that it does treat the events as a historic whole. The events of 1940 cannot be understood in isolation from all that went before. Nor is it sufficient to draw a superficial picture of previous political history. It is necessary to analyse deeply the whole character of the French social structure and to understand how the profound decay in the French ruling class developed as part of the decay and parasitism of French imperialism as a whole.

It is the merit of Pritt's book that it is the only one which does give this coherent picture. With characteristic skill Pritt marshals a vast number of facts and presents them so as to bring out the main features of development. He starts from the very beginning of the Third Republic, stained at its birth by the bloody suppression of the Commune, and shows how the history of this Republic is at the same time a history of French Imperialism. He brings out the basic weaknesses of French Imperialism, and especially its parasitic character, which was so prominent after 1918. He shows the relation of this to the growing class tension and the emergence of Fascism, the significance of the temporary check to the latter by the victory of the Popular Front, and how the defeat of the Popular Front in the Munichite period with the connivance of British reaction ushered in the furious offensive against the working class and the national disintegration of the period of the "phoney" war in 1939-40. It is absolutely essential to understand this development because it was the basis of the monstrous debacle and capitulation of the French ruling class.

The outlines of this debacle are now well known. It is true, however, that the popular writers are only able to use their disclosures of corruption and incompetence as the basis of a fantastic interpretation of events, converting a historical process into a mystery story of backstairs intrigue and Fascist mistresses. The main defect of all these books is that they see the causes of the debacle in isolated and incidental circumstances. Nevertheless their evidence can be used as part of the general picture, and this is done in the book under review.

Pritt's book is particularly important because the events of the defeat of June 1940 and the subsequent capitulation need to be restudied now in the light of the further development of the war and the light it throws on the role of the Soviet Union. This further development has helped to open the eyes of many people as to the meaning of what took place in the early period of the war and to dissipate those anti-Soviet prejudices which made it impossible for many people to understand the real significance of what was taking place in France. Mr. Pritt has played a foremost role in this country in bringing out the true meaning of Soviet foreign policy and, therefore, has so much the greater justification for his historically correct view of French history.

Precisely here is seen the marked contrast between Mr. Pritt's book and even the more sober and informed of the other books on the fall of the French Republic. The second main defect of nearly all these books is that their authors are incapable of seeing the real character of the betrayal that took place, because they are blinded by anti-Communist and anti-working class bias. Therefore, instead of doing justice to the heroic fight of the class-conscious workers against Fascism and for the national interests of their country in the face of the bitterest persecution, they class the Communists with the Fascists as equally enemies of France and equally responsible for the downfall. A typical example is the popular little volume by the French socialist, Levy, called "*The Truth About France,*" which in its anti-Communist slandering goes so far as to record as a fact the ignorant falsehood that Ribbentrop was awarded the Order of Lenin.

Where these bourgeois observers see through glasses darkened by class prejudice, Pritt sees clearly. Just as during the period of the Popular Front the millionaire owners of France exported their capital abroad, neglected the development of industry and even sabotaged national defence itself, while they accused the workers of precisely that sabotage which they themselves were carrying out, so also during the war the reactionaries, defeatists and pro-Nazis carried on their dirty work under cover of an attack against the working class and its Communist leadership, on the pretence that the latter were guilty of precisely the crimes that they themselves were engaged in committing. This is brought out very clearly in Mr. Pritt's book.

All this is now undeniable. Subsequent

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developments have not failed to bring out the truth. It is precisely those who were most violently anti-Communist who are now the most pliant tools of Nazism. Even the second rank of Quislings and Nazi agents all come from the ranks of the Munichite Socialists, defeatists and disrupters of the Popular Front.

We are now reaching a further stage in the struggle of the French people, that of the people's fight against Nazi domination and oppression. It is impossible for the press in this country to disguise the fact that it is the Communists who are in the vanguard of the struggle. It is the Communists who are being executed, who are being shot down in demonstrations, who are mobilising the masses for revolt. Pritt's book ends with two short but valuable chapters on the lessons of the French experience for us and on the future. Here, perhaps he looks too quickly ahead. Writing before the Soviet-German war and the flaring up of the people's struggle in France, he sees the revolt of the people taking the form immediately of a revolution for Socialism. He declares "we can assert with confidence that the future, the near future, of the French people will be the establishment of the Socialist state, through the strength and courage of the French working class." This will undoubtedly come, but the first stage is the gathering revolt of the peoples under working-class leadership for the overthrow of Nazi tyranny.

CLEMENS DUTT.

Early Days

Pioneering Days by Thomas Bell. (Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd. 316 pp. 7s. 6d. net).

I HAVE found the reading and re-reading of this little book of memoirs by my old comrade-in-arms, Thomas Bell, intensely interesting. It recalls so vividly the differences and struggles over policy and tactics, as well as personal associations and comradeships, of twenty and more years ago within the revolutionary movement in this country, which nonetheless have their significance and lessons for the struggle of to-day.

Thomas Bell and I are practically of the same age and generation, both in years and in the length of our association with the revolutionary movement. Tom appeared on the scene in 1882, and I made my bow in 1884. He joined the Social-Democratic Party at the age of twenty in 1902, and I at the same age in 1904. After a short spell in the S.D.F., Tom left to help to form the Socialist Labour Party, and played a leading and foremost role in that pioneering organisation. I remained in the S.D.F. and in the British Socialist Party in which the S.D.F. was subsequently merged. For fifteen years we surveyed each other across the barriers of sectarianism, and came together in 1919 to help lead the way to establishing the Communist Party of Great Britain. It is on the basis of our contribution to the task of laying the foundations of our great Party of to-day that I hope, as I expect Tom does also, that history will judge us and our work.

No one can entirely dissociate himself from his past, however clearly he may recognise his mistakes and misjudgments of men and movements and policies. And if the interminable controversies of twenty-five years ago were to be resumed, it is probable that Tom and I would find many of our old views of the respective roles and merits of the S.L.P. and the B.S.P. still remaining. But Tom had the advantage of a workshop training and experience which as a clerical worker I never had, and his pioneering efforts in militant trade unionism and workshop organisation, manifested in the shop stewards movement which developed during the 1914-18 war, prepared the way for building up the activities which are the basis of our Party's power and influence in the workshops and factories to-day.

To say that we were narrow and sectarian and intractable in those pioneering days is to put it very mildly. But we were groping for the light, the light which was shown to us so clearly by Lenin in 1917. We were Marxists in principle. We believed in the class struggle and sought to apply it in action. But our knowledge of Marxism was limited by the teaching then available to us, a teaching which, as Lenin said later, "transformed Marxism into a dogma, regarded it as a symbol of faith and not as a guide to action."

Those who wish to know how we came together inspired by the Bolshevik Revolution of November, 1917, how, under Lenin's guidance we solved all our problems and difficulties, broke down the sectarian barriers that divided us, and launched our Communist ship on the revolutionary seas, should read this book of Thomas Bell's. Naturally, it suffers the defects that would inevitably attach themselves to personal reminiscence relating to an epoch that was the immediate prelude to the revolutionary world-shaking events of to-day. But it contains many lessons for the Communists of the present day, and is a worthy contribution to the history which our Party is making to-day.

ALBERT INKPIN.

ERRATUM.

In the September issue, p. 383, 2nd col., line 25, for "not" read "now."

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